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Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner answers questions about averting the “fiscal cliff” on an episode of “Face the Nation” on Sunday, Dec. 2, 2012. Geithner said Republicans have to stop using fuzzy “political math” and say how much they are willing to raise tax rates on the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans and then specify the spending cuts they want.

(AP Photo/CBS News, Chris Usher)

JACKIE CALMES

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WASHINGTON – At a stale-

mate in their talks to avoid a self-imposed fiscal crisis at the end of this month,

the lead negotiators for the White House and congressional Republicans

used the Sunday television news shows to defend their respective positions and

blame the other side for the impasse.

Continued on next Page



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Geithner, Boehner defend fiscal crisis stances

Continued from front

"Right now I would say we're nowhere, period. We're nowhere," House Speaker John A. Boehner, R-Ohio, said on "Fox News Sunday."

"We've put a serious offer on the table by putting revenues out there to try to get this question resolved," he said. "But the White House has responded with virtually nothing."

For the administration, Treasury Secretary Timothy F. Geithner countered on Fox and four other programs by outlining President Barack Obama's proposals for long-term deficit reduction and insisting that Republicans were blocking compromise by their opposition to letting the Bush-era tax rates on high incomes expire as scheduled by law on Dec. 31. Obama and Democratic lawmakers want to extend the tax cuts on annual household income below \$250,000 but not for income above that level, as the president vowed in his re-election campaign.

"There's just no reason why 98 percent of Americans have to see their taxes go up because some members of Congress on the Republican side want to block tax rate increases for 2 percent of the wealthiest Americans," Geithner said. "Remember, those tax rates, those tax cuts, cost a trillion dollars over 10 years." "Those rates are going to have to go up," he added. "That's an essential

part of a deal."

The televised jousting reflected the political posturing that is typical in the early stages of Washington budget negotiations, with leaders of each party seeking to persuade the public of the rightness of its position and to bring pressure on the other side to compromise. Geithner

looming and the holidays approaching. Absent a deal offering an alternative, across-the-board cuts in domestic and military programs and immediate tax increases for all Americans — the result of the expiration of the Bush-era tax cuts — would take effect in January. Together, the automatic spending cuts and

Geithner, also on Fox, said that whether the nation does so is "a decision that lies in the hands of Republicans who are now opposing an increase in the tax rates."

The goal of both Obama and Congress is a package of alternative spending cuts and revenue increases. Republicans, led



House Speaker John Boehner of Ohio speaks to reporters on Capitol Hill in Washington. "Right now I would say we're nowhere, period. We're nowhere," Boehner, said on "Fox News Sunday."

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

gave interviews to all five major Sunday shows, and Boehner in turn requested time on Fox late last week, prompting the network to dump the two senators it had booked. But the White House and Congress do not have much time for the usual negotiating games, with the year-end deadline

tax increases would cut the deficit for fiscal year 2013 by more than \$500 billion, an amount so sudden and large that economists say it would cause a recession. They have called the event the "fiscal cliff."

"I don't want any part of going over the cliff," Boehner said on Fox.

by Boehner, have offered since the president's re-election to accept higher revenue, but they have refused to support a partial extension of the Bush tax cuts that would let the top income tax rates rise to 39.6 percent, the level from the Clinton administration, from the current 35 percent. □

If 'cliff' deal fails, impact won't be instant

MICHAEL D. SHEAR

© 2012 New York Times

WASHINGTON — If Washington fails to reach a tax and spending deal by Jan. 1, paychecks will shrink as rates rise. But defense contractors will keep working. Parks and monuments will remain open. Financial markets will either slump or not.

America's fiscal condition will be altered without a deal between President Barack Obama and the Republicans in Congress.

But not radically so, and in many cases not immediately.

The president and his Democratic allies are still deeply nervous about life on the other side of the fiscal deadline, and they continue to say they are eager to avoid that possibility. But Obama's re-election victory and the few immediate implications from a breakdown in negotiations has emboldened them.

Obama pressed his case confidently Friday at a toy

manufacturer in Pennsylvania. He warned that the Republicans' refusal to reach an acceptable deal by the end of the year would be "sort of like the lump of coal you get for Christmas."

And in a message to the millions of people subscribed to the White House email list, David Plouffe, a senior adviser to Obama, urged supporters to keep the pressure on lawmakers and warned of the dire consequences if the negotiators were unable to find

common ground.

In Washington at the end of last week, Republicans offered a defiant tone, scoffing at the president's proposal for \$1.6 trillion in tax increases on the wealthy combined with new stimulus spending and other Democratic priorities. On Saturday, Sen. Orrin G. Hatch of Utah denounced what he called "radical" and "unserious" proposals by the president that he said represented an utter lack of leadership. □

FISCAL CLIFF HIGHLIGHTS

The "fiscal cliff" is an economy-rattling combination of expiring tax cuts and major across-the-board spending reductions for the military and domestic programs. It's the punishment for previous failures of a bitterly divided Congress and White House to deal with the government's spiraling debt or overhaul tax laws. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the austerity program would reduce the deficit by \$503 billion through the end of next September, or approaching \$700 billion for the entire calendar year. The CBO says millions of jobs could be lost.

The fiscal cliff includes:

—The expiration of George W. Bush-era tax cuts on income, investments, married couples and families with children and inheritances. In addition, some 26 million more face the alternative minimum tax next filing season, which would raise their taxes by an average of \$3,700. Cost through September: \$330 billion.

—A \$55 billion, 9 percent cut in the defense budget next year and another \$55 billion in cuts to domestic programs, including a 2 percent cut to Medicare providers. — The expiration of unemployment benefits for the long-term jobless. Cost: \$26 billion.

—A sharp cut in reimbursements for doctors participating in Medicare. Cost: \$11 billion.

—The expiration of Obama's temporary 2 percentage point cut in payroll taxes. Cost: \$95 billion.

—A variety of smaller taxes cuts for both businesses and individuals collectively known as tax "extenders." They include a tax credit for research and development and a deduction for sales taxes in states that don't have an income tax. Cost: about \$65 billion. □



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Abbas returns to hero's welcome in West Bank

**ARON HELLER
DALIA NAMMARI
Associated Press
RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP)**

— The Palestinian president returned triumphantly to the West Bank on Sunday, receiving a boisterous welcome from thousands of cheering supporters at a rally celebrating his people's new acceptance to the United Nations.

An Israeli decision to cut off a cash transfer to the financially troubled Palestinian Authority, following an earlier decision to build thousands of new homes in Jewish settlements, failed to put a damper on the celebrations.

But Palestinian officials acknowledged they were undecided on what to do with their newfound status, and were waiting for upcoming Israeli elections and new ideas from President Barack Obama before deciding how to proceed.

Outside the headquarters of President Mahmoud Abbas in the West Bank city of Ramallah, some 5,000 people thronged a square, hoisted Palestinian flags and cheered their leader's

return from New York. Large posters of the Palestinian leader, whose popularity had plummeted in recent months, adorned nearby buildings.



Palestinians hold pictures of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, as they celebrate their successful bid to win U.N. statehood recognition in the West Bank city of Ramallah, Sunday, Dec. 2, 2012. The Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has returned home to a hero's welcome after winning a resounding endorsement for Palestinian independence at the United Nations.

(AP Photo/Majdi Mohammed)

"We now have a state," Abbas said to wild applause. "The world has said loudly, 'Yes to the state of Palestine.'"

The United Nations General Assembly last week overwhelmingly endorsed an

independent Palestinian state in the West Bank, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, territories Israel captured in the 1967 war.

The move to upgrade the

potential significance.

The vote amounted to an international endorsement of the Palestinian position on future border arrangements with Israel and an

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rejects a return to Israel's 1967 lines. Israel remains in control in parts of the West Bank and considers east Jerusalem, the Palestinians' hoped-for capital, an integral part of its capital.

Israel also continues to restrict access to Gaza. Israel withdrew seven years ago from the coastal strip, and it is now ruled by Hamas Islamic militants who regularly fire rockets at Israel.

Israel, backed by the U.S., campaigned strongly against the statehood measure, accusing the Palestinians of trying to bypass direct peace negotiations, which it said were the only viable path to a Palestinian state.

The Israeli lobbying efforts failed miserably. Just eight other countries voted with Israel, and even its closest allies in Europe, including Germany, Italy, France and Britain, either abstained or voted with the Palestinians. Israel responded strongly and swiftly. □

Taliban bombers attack air base in Afghanistan

**AZAM AHMED
MATTHEW ROSENBERG
© 2012 New York Times
KABUL, Afghanistan**

— Taliban forces attacked a large coalition airfield in eastern Afghanistan early Sunday morning, detonating three car bombs near the entrance of the base before sparking a two-hour gun battle that claimed the lives of nine insurgents, three Afghan security guards and at least

four civilians whose vehicle was caught in the crossfire, Afghan officials and witnesses said.

Disguised in coalition military uniforms, Taliban fighters attempted to enter the base following the initial suicide bombings, which took place just before 6 a.m., but were repelled by a battery of coalition firepower that included helicopter gunships, officials said. □

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NTSB: Conrail studied problems day before NJ crash

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Associated Press

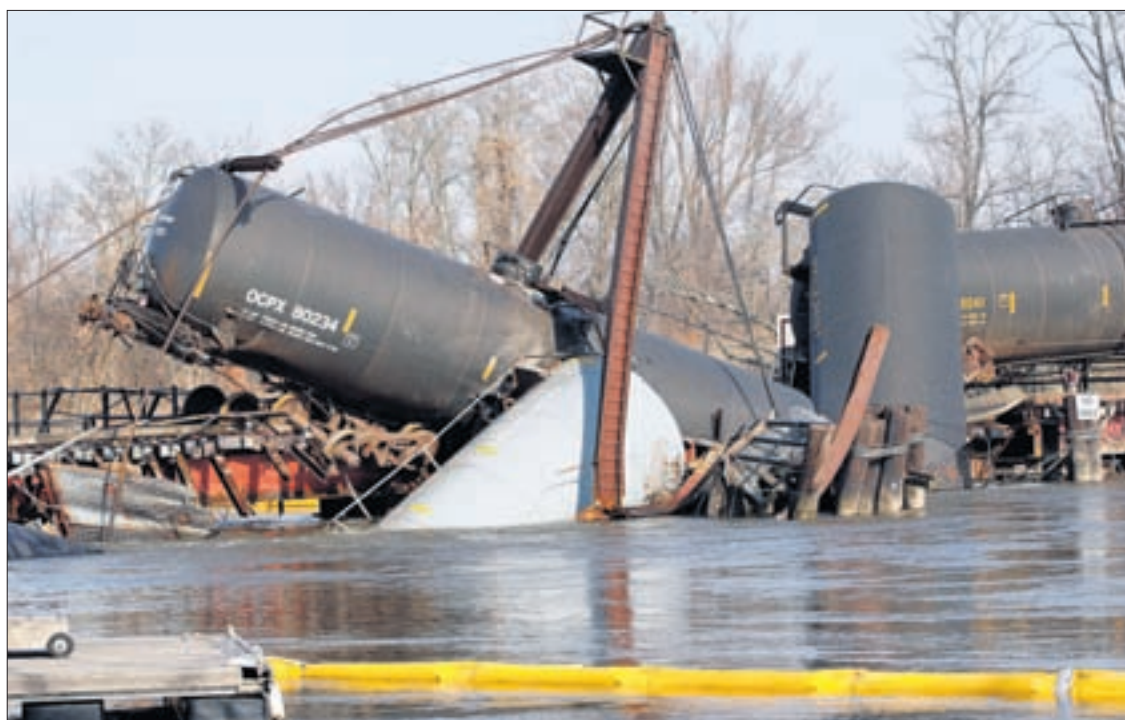
PAULSBORO, N.J. (AP) —

More than 100 southern New Jersey residents will be kept out of their homes for several more days as crews work to clear a hazardous gas that spewed from a ruptured freight train car.

Noting that the hazardous material is still in the area, officials said Sunday that the Paulsboro, N.J. residents won't be able to return to their homes in the 12-block evacuation zone until at least Saturday.

Officials hoped to start removing the hazardous material, vinyl chloride, from the ruptured tanker sometime Sunday. It was not clear how long that would take to complete.

Public schools in the southern Jersey town will be open on Monday, and officials said air testing quality will be conducted to ensure students' safety. How-



A containment boom floats in Mantua Creek Saturday, Dec. 1, 2012, near freight train tank cars that derailed in Paulsboro, N.J. Residents in an area of about 12 blocks near the derailment remain out of their homes as officials continued their efforts to clear a hazardous gas that spewed from a ruptured freight train car.

(AP Photo/Mel Evans)

ever, a day care center and the municipal courts will be closed.

The derailment Friday sent

dozens of people to a hospital, but no serious injuries have been reported.

Federal investigators said

Sunday that Conrail crews had studied reported signal problems at the railroad bridge where the derail-

ment occurred.

The National Transportation Safety Board cannot examine the scene until the chemicals are removed. But the agency has begun reviewing records with a focus on both the signal problems reported recently and a 2009 train derailment on the same bridge.

Conrail regularly moves tons of hazardous material over the low bridge, which was originally built in 1873. The bridge straddles Mantua Creek, a tributary near the Delaware River in the industrial town of Paulsboro. The bridge operates like a garden fence, with a section that swings sideways to open for boat traffic, then closes and locks into place for freight trains.

The NTSB expects to focus its probe on that locking mechanism along with the signal devices, which are triggered by sensors on the bridge, not by dispatchers.



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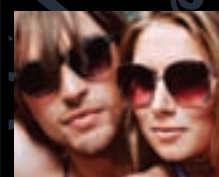
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Counselor:

Manning's history showed self-harm risk

DAVID DISHNEAU

Associated Press

FORT MEADE, Maryland

(AP) — An Army private charged with sending U.S. secrets to the website WikiLeaks had a history of suicidal thoughts and aloof behavior that outweighed a psychiatrist's opinion that he was no risk to himself, two former counselors testified Sunday.

Army Staff Sgt. Ryan Jordan and Marine Master Sgt. Craig Blenis testified on the sixth day of a pre-trial hearing for Pfc. Bradley Manning at Fort Meade, near Baltimore. The hearing is to determine whether Manning's nine months in pretrial confinement at the Marine Corps brig in Quantico, Virginia, were so punishing that the judge should dismiss all charges. The 24-year-old intelligence analyst is accused of sending hundreds of thousands of classified documents to the secret-spilling website in 2009 and 2010 when he was stationed in Baghdad. The counselors, both of whom worked in the brig, sat on a board that recommended to the brig commander that Manning remain in maximum custody and on either injury-prevention or suicide-risk status — conditions that kept him confined to his cell 23 hours a day, sometimes with no clothing.

Jordan said under cross-ex-



This artist rendering shows Army Pfc. Bradley Manning, right, being shown a bedsheet as he testified in his pretrial Wikileaks hearing in Fort Meade, Md. Manning, who is charged with leaking classified material to Wikileaks in the biggest security breach in the country's history testified Friday that he once tied a bedsheet into a noose while considering suicide after his arrest.

(AP Photo/William Hennessy)

amination by defense attorney David Coombs that besides the mental-health report, he considered evidence that Manning had contemplated suicide six to eight months earlier after his arrest in Iraq. The evidence included a noose Manning had fashioned from a bedsheet while confined in Kuwait, and a written statement he made upon arrival at Quantico in July 2010 that he was "always planning and never acting" on suicidal impulses. Jordan acknowledged Manning had been a polite, courteous and nearly trouble-free detainee at Quantico.

"Wouldn't his past six

months of performance be an indicator of his potential for future behavior?" Coombs asked.

But Jordan maintained that Manning's unwillingness to converse with him and other brig staff was a warning sign he was at risk of self-harm.

Jordan said he considered the opinion of the brig psychiatrist, Navy Capt. William Hocter, that Manning was no longer at risk of self-harm. But Jordan said the weight he gave to Hocter's views was diminished because another detainee had recently killed himself after his custody status was reduced on Hocter's advice. □

Negotiations resume in LA cargo port strike

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Contract talks between clerical workers at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach and shippers have resumed as the strike entered a sixth day on Sunday.

The walkout has dramatically slowed activity at the busiest U.S. cargo complex as dockworkers refuse to cross picket lines set up by union clerical workers.

The clerical workers began striking Tuesday to raise the

ante in a 2 1/2-year-old contract battle over claims that management had been outsourcing their well-paid jobs out of state and overseas.

The Los Angeles/Long Beach Harbor Employers Association, which represents 14 shippers and terminal operators, denies the allegation. They say they have offered lifelong job security to the 600 or so full-time clerical workers. □

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2 dead after bus crash at US airport; 3 critical

SUZETTE LABOY
Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — A charter bus carrying 32 members of a church group hit a concrete overpass at Miami International Airport this weekend after the driver got lost, killing two men on board and leaving three people critically injured, officials said.

The large, white bus was too tall for the 8-foot-6-inch (2.59-meter) entrance to the arrivals area, said airport spokesman Greg Chin. Buses are supposed to go through the departures area, which has a higher ceiling, he said.

Chin said passengers told him they were part of a group of Jehovah's Witnesses headed to West Palm Beach. Police said in a news release that the group had chartered the bus to take them to a

church convention there.

The group was made up of congregation members of Sweetwater's Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, said Sweetwater Mayor Manny Maroño. Sweetwater is a Miami suburb.

Police said that one man, Serafin Castillo, 86, died at the scene. A second man, Francisco Urana, 56, died later at a hospital. Both men were Miami residents. "This is a tragic accident that has affected many families, as well as, our Sweetwater family," Maroño said in a press release. "I am pursuing all avenues to get in touch with the appropriate persons to officially extend our help to the congregation and those who were hurt."

A phone number listed for the center in Sweetwater went unanswered.

At the airport, two large



Law enforcement officers stand next to a bus after it hit a concrete overpass at Miami International Airport in Miami on Saturday, Dec. 1, 2012. The vehicle was too tall for the 8-foot-6-inch entrance to the arrivals area, and buses are supposed to go through the departures area which has a higher ceiling, according to an airport spokesperson.

(AP Photo/Wilfredo Lee)

signs warn drivers of large vehicles not to pass beneath the concrete overpass. One attached to the top of the concrete barrier reads: "High Vehicle

STOP Turn Left." The other, placed to the left of the driveway and several feet in front of the barrier, says all vehicles higher than the 8-foot-6 threshold must turn left.

Three people were at hospitals in critical condition. The other 27 surviving passengers were hurt, but their injuries were less extensive, authorities said.

One man died at the scene; the second died later at a hospital.

Eight of the 14 patients taken to Ryder Trauma Center at Jackson Memorial Hospital were in stable condition while two others

were in critical, said hospital spokeswoman Lidia Amoretti. Three others were expected to be discharged later Saturday.

A majority of the injuries were facial due to the frontal impact, said Miami-Dade Police spokesman Det. Alvaro Zabaleta.

Zabaleta said it was "too early to tell if in fact any charges are going to be filed."

Oswaldo Lopez, an officer with the Miami-Dade Aviation Department, said he first heard a loud noise Saturday morning and was certain it was some sort of car wreck.

He said he went inside the bus to help and found several passengers thrown into the center aisle. He said the passengers, many of whom were elderly, remained calm after the wreck.

"It was just very bloody," he said of the scene.

After helping the passengers, Lopez suffered some injuries of his own — his left arm and a finger on his right hand were both bandaged. Fire trucks and police cars swarmed the area after 8 a.m. Saturday, and the bus was blocked off by yellow police tape. The front of the bus remained wedged beneath the overpass for hours before the vehicle was towed away. □

George H.W. Bush in stable condition

HOUSTON (AP) — Former U.S. President George H.W. Bush remains in stable condition at a Houston hospital where he is being treated for a lingering cough related to bronchitis.

George Kovacik, a spokesman for Methodist Hospital, said Sunday there has been

no change over the last couple of days in the status of the 88-year-old Bush.

Aides originally said the 41st president could be released from the hospital this weekend. But his cough has yet to clear up, meaning he has stayed put while doctors "play it safe."

Bush has been in and out of the hospital recently for complications resulting from bronchitis.

Hospital visitors have included Bush's son, former President George W. Bush, and his wife, former first lady Laura Bush. They live in Dallas. □

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Anti-Morsi judge rebellion complete in Egypt

**HAMZA HENDAWI
Associated Press**

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt's rebellion of the judges against President Mohamed Morsi became complete on Sunday with the country's highest court declaring an open-ended strike on the day it was supposed to rule on the legitimacy of two key assemblies controlled by allies of the Islamist leader. The strike by the Supreme Constitutional Court and opposition plans to march on the presidential palace on Tuesday take the country's latest political crisis to a level not seen in the nearly two years of turmoil since Hosni Mubarak's ouster in a popular uprising. Judges from the country's highest appeals court and its sister lower court were already on an indefinite strike, joining colleagues from other tribunals who suspended work last week to protest what they saw as Morsi's assault on the judiciary. The last time Egypt had an all-out strike by the judiciary was in 1919, when judges joined an uprising against British colonial rule. The standoff began when Morsi issued decrees on Nov. 22 giving him near-absolute powers that granted himself and the Islamist-dominated assembly drafting the new constitution immunity from the courts.

The constitutional panel then raced in a marathon session last week to vote on the charter's 236 clauses without the participation of liberal and Christian members. The fast-track hearing pre-empted a decision from the Supreme Constitutional Court that was widely expected to dissolve the constituent assembly. The judges on Sunday postponed their ruling on that case just before they went on strike. Without a functioning justice system, Egypt will be plunged even deeper into turmoil. It has already seen a dramatic surge in crime after the uprising, while state authority is being challenged in many aspects of life and the courts are burdened by a massive backlog of cases. "The country cannot function for long like this, something has to give," said Negad Borai, a private law firm director and a rights activist. "We are in a country without courts of law and a president with all the powers in his hands. This is a clear-cut dictatorial climate," he said. Mohamed Abdel-Aziz, a rights lawyer, said the strike by the judges will impact everything from divorce and theft to financial disputes that, in some cases, could involve foreign investors.

"Ordinary citizens affected by the strike will become curious about the details of the current political crisis

and could possibly make a choice to join the protests," he said.

The Judges Club, a union

with 9,500 members, said late Sunday that judges would not, as customary, oversee the national referendum Morsi called for Dec. 15 on the draft constitution hammered out and hurriedly voted on last week.

The absence of their oversight would raise more questions about the validity of the vote. If the draft is passed in the referendum, parliamentary elections are to follow two months later and they too may not have judicial supervision.

The judges say they will remain on strike until Morsi rescinds his decrees, which the Egyptian leader said were temporary and needed to protect the nation's path to democratic rule. □



Supporters of Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi chant slogans as riot police, left, stand guard in front of the entrance of Egypt's top court, in Cairo, Egypt, Sunday, Dec. 2, 2012. Egypt's top court announced on Sunday the suspension of its work indefinitely to protest "psychological and physical pressures," saying its judges could not enter its Nile-side building because of the Islamist president's supporters gathered outside.

(AP Photo/Nasser Nasser)



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Bersani wins Italy primary, heads to general vote

NICOLE WINFIELD
Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Pier Luigi Bersani, the head of Italy's main center-left Democratic Party, won a runoff primary Sunday to become the main center-left candidate for Italy's 2013 general elections — a vote that polls indicate could well be won by the Democratic Party given the utter disarray of the opposing center-right. Preliminary results gave Bersani 60.8 percent of the vote compared to Florence Mayor Matteo Renzi's 39.1 percent, with two-thirds of the votes counted.

Even before the results were released, Renzi conceded the victory to Bersani in a Twitter message, writing: "It was the right thing to try, it was beautiful to do it together. Thank you all from the heart." The primary had been closely watched since the Democratic Party has a significant lead in the polls over former Premier Silvio Berlusconi's

center-right People of Freedom party, which has been in chaos follow-

ing the media mogul's 2011 downfall, a series of corruption scandals within party

ranks and Berlusconi's indecision over whether to run for a fourth term.

The 2013 general election — expected in March or April — will decide if Italy continues on the same path to financial health charted by Premier Mario Monti, appointed last year to save Italy from a Greek-style debt crisis.

The former European commissioner was named to head a technical government after international markets lost confidence in then-premier Berlusconi's ability to reign in Italy's public debt and push through structural reforms.

Monti has ruled out running for office but has said he would be willing to stay on in some capacity if he could be of service.

Some commentators have floated the idea of Monti taking over the largely ceremonial role as Italian president, while others say his talents would be put to better use as treasury minister.

Nearly all polls had projected Bersani would beat Renzi, who campaigned on an Obama-style "Let's change Italy now" mantra that attracted many disgruntled Italians back to politics. Renzi used his youth — he's 37 — to bolster his call for Italy's entire political class to be "scrapped."

Bersani, by contrast, is 61 and a veteran of previous center-left governments, where he has served as transport and industry minister.

In his victory speech, Bersani made clear his new job running for premier would begin Monday with a trip to Libya, Italy's former colony, to meet with the government.

"I want Italy to retake its place in political, moral, cultural and economic terms in the Mediterranean," Bersani said to cheers.

But even in defeat, Renzi won a victory of sorts for having changed the Italian left — perhaps forever, analysts said. □



Pier Luigi Bersani, leader of the center-left Democratic Party, arrives with his wife Daniela, second from left, and his daughters Elisa and Margherita, right, for a primary runoff, in Piacenza, Italy, Sunday, Dec. 2, 2012.
(AP Photo/Antonio Calanni)

Merkel does not rule out Greek "haircut"

JUERGEN BAETZ
Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Germany no longer rules out the possibility of forgiving Greece some of its debt once the country's finances are in order, Chancellor Angela Merkel said, signaling a softening of her government's tough stance on Greece. The question of debt forgiveness, or a "haircut," can be revisited after the current bailout program will be successfully concluded and the government in Athens no longer takes on new debt, Merkel said in an interview with the German Sunday tabloid Bild am Sonntag. Merkel's government had previously ruled out forgiving debt, arguing that Greece must implement the agreed-upon austerity measures and structural re-

forms in return for its bailout loans. But the International Monetary Fund and many economists say eurozone nations must also forgive Greece some of its debt to allow the country to overcome

its debt crisis. Greece is trapped by an unsustainable debt level — forecast to reach 190 percent of the country's economic output next year — which forces it to drastically slash its budget. That, in turn, deepens

the country's recession, and makes Greece's debt load rise even more in relation to its gross domestic product.

When asked about a haircut on Greece's debt as a way out of the situation, Merkel told the newspaper "when Greece one day again manages with its revenue, without taking on new debt, then we have to look anew at the situation and reevaluate." "That won't be before 2014-2015 if all goes as planned," she added.

Greece has promised its international creditors to achieve a budget surplus of 4.5 percent of its GDP by 2016, which would enable the country to start paying back part of its debt. □



German Chancellor Angela Merkel at the EU summit in Brussels. Germany no longer rules out the possibility of forgiving Greece some of its debt once the country's finances are in order, Chancellor Angela Merkel said.
(AP Photo/Michel Euler)

Syria: Warplanes pummel rebel positions in Damascus suburbs



A Syrian girl chants slogans during a demonstration in the Bustan Al-Qasr district of Aleppo, Syria. Syrian warplanes and artillery blasted parts of the capital Damascus and its rebellious suburbs on Sunday as rebels try to push their way into the center of President Bashar Assad's power base.

(AP Photo/Narciso Contreras)

BARBARA SURK
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Syrian warplanes and artillery blasted parts of the capital Damascus and its rebellious suburbs on Sunday, part of what activists described as intense fighting as rebels try to push their way into the center of President Bashar Assad's power base. In central Syria, a car bomb killed at least 15 people, the official news agency reported. The fighting over the past few weeks in Damascus is the most serious in the capital since July, when rebels captured several neighborhoods before a swift government counteroffensive swept them out.

The Britain-based activist group Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said fighter jets struck twice in the suburb of Daraya as regime artillery pounded other districts just south of Damascus. The Syrian air force also launched airstrikes on the northern city of Aleppo, some cities in the northern province of Idlib and the Mediterranean city of Latakia, the Observatory said. The group relies on reports from activists on the ground. The Damascus suburbs have been opposition strongholds since the uprising against Assad began in March 2011. In the past weeks, the army has pressed an offensive

to regain lost territory near the capital, including two air bases. The Observatory said there was also ongoing fighting in towns near the Damascus International Airport on the southern edge of the city. The towns include Aqraba, Beit Saham and Yalda. The road to the airport from Damascus was closed on Thursday because of

heavy fighting, but authorities reopened it after troops secured the area, activists said. The Information Ministry said on Saturday the airport was operating normally and that the road leading to the facility is "totally secure." On Sunday, EgyptAir Chief Executive Roshdy Zakaria said the country's national carrier will resume flights to

Damascus and Aleppo after a three-day suspension because of poor security on the roads around the two airports. In central Homs province, a car bomb exploded near Omar Bin al-Khattab mosque in the al-Hamra neighborhood of Homs, killing at least 15 people and wounding 24, state-run SANA news agency said. □



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Riots mar Mexico's presidential inauguration

MARK STEVENSON
OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ
Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Enrique Peña Nieto took the oath of office as Mexico's new president Saturday vowing to restore peace and security and take on the vested interests that have hindered economic prosperity.

As several hundred protesters threw fire bombs at police and smashed plate glass windows, Peña Nieto marked the return of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, with a 13-point plan heavy on old-party populist handouts but with reforms designed to boost the economy and modernize the education and justice systems.

"Mexico has not achieved the advances that the population demands or deserves," Peña Nieto said in an inaugural speech unusual for its heavy emphasis on policy. "It's time for us together to break the myths and paradigms and all else that has limited our development."

Inaugural events were marred all day by protesters opposed to the return of the PRI after a 12-year hiatus.

Inside and outside the congressional chambers where he took the oath of office, his opponents called his inauguration an "imposition" of a party that ruled for 71 years using a mix of handouts, graft and rigged elections.

At least 76 people were treated for injuries, including 29 who hospitalized, as the result of clashes be-

tween protesters and tear-gas firing police, the Red Cross said. City officials said 103 people were detained, including 11 minors.

Vandals smashed windows of stores, banks and a hotel and made bonfires of furniture dragged into the streets. One downtown bank office where all the windows were broken had the words "Welcome

families and will work to ensure that roads and cities are again "peaceful areas where Mexicans can travel safely without fear of loss of their liberty or life."

Mexico has suffered a spike in violence since outgoing President Felipe Calderon launched an offensive against organized crime upon taking office six years ago. Some 60,000 people

governing with the list, having started his term as governor of Mexico State with 608 projects that he promised to complete.

The tone of his speech was conciliatory, an attempt to alleviate fears about a return to the PRI's autocratic past.

"I will respect every voice," he said. "I will run an open government that speaks



Protestors attempt to intimidate riot police with a pole in the streets of downtown Mexico City. Protests against Mexico's newly sworn-in President Enrique Peña Nieto began early Saturday morning with violent confrontations in the streets and protest speeches from opposition parties inside the congress.
 (AP Photo/Marco Ugarte)

Peña" painted across the facade in green.

Peña Nieto countered with a speech full of specifics, from creating an integrated crime prevention program to ending the patronage and buying of teacher positions that rule the public education system.

He said he will put security at the center of all policies for Mexicans and their

have been killed by drug violence since then, according to some estimates. While officials first said most of the victims were involved in organized crime, the killings and kidnapping spread to innocent civilians as drug gangs came to rule entire towns and even parts of some states.

Peña Nieto turned to his usual style of result-oriented

with honesty, seeks opinion, listens to its citizens ... I will be a president who is close to the people." Many of his proposals harkened back to the old populist PRI, promising pensions for the elderly, life insurance for single mothers to support their children through college, a program to end hunger and a new system of passenger trains. □

Boat propeller kills US student in Dominica: AP

CARLISLE BAPTISTE
Associated Press

ROSEAU, Dominica (AP) — An American college student was killed during a visit to the Caribbean island of Dominica when she was struck by a dive boat's propeller, police said Sunday. The fourth-year University of Virginia student has been identified as 22-year-old Casey Schulman of Falls Church, Virginia.

Police Inspector Richmond Valentine said she was killed Saturday afternoon as she and more than 50 other students visited Dominica as part of the school's "Semester at Sea" program.

In a statement released to students and faculty, Patricia Lampkin, University of Virginia vice president and chief student affairs officer, said Schulman's death occurred during a recreational boating trip organized independently of Semester at Sea activities.

Valentine said a group of students, including Schulman, hired a boat owned by local company Anchorage Dive. After a snorkeling excursion, the boat went to the west coast community of Mero where some students frolicked in the water and others relaxed on the beach.

Schulman was swimming when she was struck by the boat's propeller as the captain was apparently driving in reverse after picking up food, Valentine said. She was pronounced dead at a local hospital. □

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Gunmen assassinate peasant leader in Paraguay

ASUNCION, Paraguay (AP) — Gunmen murdered one of the surviving leaders of a peasant movement whose

four times early Saturday by bullets from a 12-gauge shotgun and a .38-caliber revolver fired by two un-

cial capital of Curuguaty. A friend, Mario Espinola, told The Associated Press that Vega was shot down when he stepped outside to feed his farm animals. Vega was among the public faces of a commission of landless peasants from the settlement of Yby Pyta, which means Red Dirt in their native Guarani language.

He had lobbied the government for many years to redistribute some of the ranchland that Colorado Party Sen. Blas Riquelme began occupying in the 1960s.

By last May, the peasants finally lost patience and moved onto the land. A firefight during their eviction on June 15 killed 11 peasants and six police officers, prompting the Colorado Party and other leading parties to vote Lugo out of office for allegedly mismanaging the dispute.

Twelve suspects, nearly all of them peasants from Yby Pyta, have been jailed without formal charges since then on suspicion of murdering the officers, seizing property and resisting authority. The prosecutor had six months to develop the case and will present his findings Dec. 16.

Vega was expected to be

a witness at the criminal trial, since he was among the few leaders who weren't killed in the clash or jailed afterward.

He wasn't charged because he was away get-

ting supplies when the violence erupted at the settlement erected by the peasants inside Riquelme's ranch, the Naranjaty Commission's secretary, Martina Paredes, told the AP. □



Vidal Vega, left, holds a banner during a march to demand the freedom of landless farmers near Curuguaty city, Paraguay. Early Saturday gunmen murdered 48-year-old Vega, one of the surviving leaders of a peasant movement whose land dispute with a powerful politician prompted the end of Fernando Lugo's presidency last June.

(AP Photo/Jorge Saenz)

land dispute with a powerful politician prompted the end of Fernando Lugo's presidency last June.

Vidal Vega, 48, was hit

identified men who sped away on a motorcycle, according to an official report prepared at the police headquarters in the provin-

Iran:

Ahmadinejad opposes election changes

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — A news agency reports Iran's president is urging parliament to abandon possible revisions in laws governing presidential elections.

The call appears part of widening political battles before June's election to pick Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's successor. Ahmadinejad has faced attacks from powerful

rivals since defying Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei last year over a key Cabinet post.

Iran's ruling clerics vet all candidates for the presidency, but parliament may impose new guidelines of age and experience that could undercut Ahmadinejad's allies.

The semiofficial ISNA news

agency says lawmakers Sunday began discussing possible changes.

On Saturday, Ahmadinejad appointed close aide Esfandiar Rahim Mashaei to a top post within the Non-Aligned Movement bloc in an apparent effort to boost Mashaei's image. But the ruling clerics are unlikely to clear Mashaei for the presidential race. □



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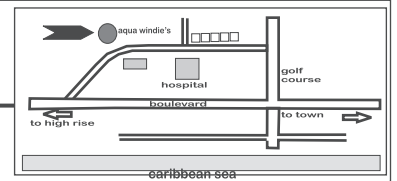
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China overtaking US as global trade leader

JOE McDONALD

YOUKYUNG LEE

AP Business Writers

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Shin Cheol-soo no longer sees his future in the United States.

The South Korean businessman supplied components to American automakers for a decade. But this year, he uprooted his family from Detroit and moved home to focus on selling to the new economic superpower: China.

In just five years, China has surpassed the United States as a trading partner for much of the world, including U.S. allies such as South Korea and Australia, according to an Associated Press analysis of trade data. As recently as 2006, the U.S. was the larger trading partner for 127 countries, versus just 70 for China. By last year the two had clearly traded places: 124 countries for China, 76 for the U.S.

In the most abrupt global shift of its kind since World War II, the trend is changing the way people live and do business from Africa to Arizona, as farmers plant more soybeans to sell to China and students sign up to learn Mandarin.

The findings show how fast China has ascended to challenge America's century-old status as the globe's dominant trader, a change that is gradually translating into political influence. They highlight how pervasive China's impact has been, spreading from neighboring Asia to Africa and now emerging in Latin America, the traditional U.S. backyard.

Despite China's now-slowing economy, its share of world output and trade is expected to keep rising, with growth forecast at up to 8 percent a year over the next decade, far above U.S. and European levels. This growth could strengthen the hand of a new generation of just-named Chinese leaders, even as it fuels strain with other nations.

Last year, Shin's Ena Industry Co. made half his sales of rubber and plastic parts to U.S. factories. But his plans call for China, which overtook the United States as the biggest auto market in 2009, to rise fivefold to 30 percent of his total by 2015. He

and his children are studying Mandarin.

"The United States is a tiger with no power," Shin said in his office, where three walls are lined with books, many about China. "Nobody can deny that China is the one now rising."

It was the 2008 global crisis that showed the resilience of China's exporters.

The recession set everyone back, but China less so than the U.S. or other major traders such as Germany. China does a bigger share of its trade with developing countries that suffered less and rebounded faster, while the United States sells to rich economies that are

ment growth at schools such as Teacher Ching, a Chinese-language kindergarten in Seoul.

Nancy Ching, the daughter of immigrants from Taiwan, opened the school with 15 students in 2004, the year after South Korea first moved from the U.S. column to the China column. Today she has 60.

"Mothers who send their kids here believe our children's generation is the China generation," she said in Chinese-accented Korean. "In the future, without learning Chinese, one won't be able to get a job."

The next step in China's trade evolution is to move beyond exporting TVs and lawn furniture

a \$12 billion cross-country highway and the \$1.3 billion Great Mosque of Algeria. The Chinese have also built highways, dams and other projects in developing countries and are starting to win contracts in the U.S. and Europe.

On a new 50-kilometer (30-mile) highway leading north of Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, dark asphalt stretches across six to eight lanes.

The \$300 million road was built by three Chinese companies and financed by the African Development Bank and the Export-Import Bank of China. It has cut a trip that took several hours 18 months ago to 10 min-

sumer Federation of Kenya.

"China appears to have a long-term plan based on increasing its commercial interests where governance issues are given a back burner," Mutoro said. The experience of Congo might foreshadow a more complex approach that Beijing envisages for other African nations. In 2008, the two governments signed a \$9 billion deal for Chinese companies to build 177 hospitals and health centers, two hydroelectric dams and thousands of miles of railways and roads. In exchange, Congo was to provide 10.6 million tons of copper and 600,000 tons of cobalt.

The deal has since been scaled back to \$6 billion under pressure from the International Monetary Fund, which felt Congo was taking on too much debt.

China's outbound investment totaled \$67.6 billion last year — just one-sixth of America's nearly \$400 billion — but it could reach \$2 trillion by 2020, according to a forecast by Rhodium Group, a research firm in New York City.

As a result, Chinese companies are using a new export — jobs. Employees at Volvo Cars worried after Chinese automaker Geely Holdings bought the money-losing Swedish brand from Ford Motor Co. in 2010. But two years later, instead of moving jobs to China, Geely has expanded Volvo's European workforce of 19,500 to about 21,500.

Majority-owned U.S. affiliates of Chinese companies support about 27,000 American jobs, up from fewer than 10,000 five years ago, according to Rhodium. In Goodyear, Arizona, Stacey Rassas was laid off in May 2010 after a 16-year career in quality control for aerospace and aluminum manufacturers. By late autumn, she and her husband were worried they might lose their house. She finally landed a job that December at a new factory that makes solar panels for one of the world's biggest solar manufacturers.

"It was the best day ever," she said. Her new employer? Suntech Power Holdings Co., a Chinese company. □



Shin Cheol-soo, chief executive of the ENA Industry, speaks during a meeting with his employees at his office in Gyeongsan, south of Seoul, South Korea. "The United States is a tiger with no power," Shin said in his office, where three walls are lined with books, many about China. "Nobody can deny that China is the one now rising." (AP Photo/Lee Jin-man)

struggling. Chinese companies have boosted exports by 7 percent this year despite anemic global demand.

During the recession, Shin, the South Korean auto parts manufacturer, saw his sales fall 50 percent. He shut one of three production lines, and banks stopped lending him money. But China's auto market was powering ahead. So Shin hired an employee in China, and is now making plans for his first factory there. On a business trip to Germany, clients told him their Chinese factories would be larger than those at home. Parents like Shin, who work at companies doing business with China, in turn fed enroll-

ment growth at schools such as Teacher Ching, a Chinese-language kindergarten in Seoul.

The investment trend started with state-owned companies that bought stakes in foreign mines and oil fields. Smaller and private Chinese companies followed, acquiring foreign enterprises to gain a bigger foothold in overseas markets, more access to resources and better technology for their own development.

China is now pushing into construction and engineering, where U.S. and European companies have long dominated. In Algeria, Chinese state-owned companies pushed aside established French and German rivals to win contracts to build

utes, said Joseph Makori, a professional driver.

"When we see the people from America, they say, 'We want to assist Kenya'," said Makori as he looked for work at an interchange about 10 kilometers from downtown. "But I don't see it. China comes and I see one thing: the road."

Chinese companies are starting to win government contracts in Kenya, which has ports that offer access to landlocked Uganda, South Sudan and Rwanda. Governments in Africa are keen to work with China because it does not tie development to human rights or democracy, said Stephen Mutoro, secretary general of the Con-



“Chanita ta di Fiesta” project wins UNWTO honors!



- “Chanita ta di Fiesta” of the University of Aruba receives the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Ulysses Award for Innovation in Enterprises.

ORANJESTAD -- The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the UNWTO Knowledge Network confer the UNWTO Ulysses Prize and Award annually to highlight and showcase Innovation and Application of Knowledge in Tourism. Since 2003, the UNWTO Ulysses Awards for Excellence have contributed to the advancement of tourism as they seek to recognize and stimulate knowledge creation, dissemination

and innovative applications in tourism, bringing the latest advances in this area to light. The UNWTO Awards, are the flagship awards for the global tourism sector that recognizes exceptional leaders for their excellence and innovative achievement in a number of categories. There are four categories of Awards for specific tourism initiatives. These include: UNWTO Ulysses Award for Innovation in Public Policy and Governance, UNWTO Ulysses Award for Innovation in Enterprises, UNWTO Ulysses Award for Innovation in Non-Governmental Organizations and UNWTO Ulysses Award for Innovation

in Research and Technology.

This year's UNWTO official ceremony conferred on November 15th in Istanbul, Turkey, where Aruba's very own Gerald “Gino” Kock from the University of Aruba's Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management Studies (FHTMS), was recognized as 3rd finalist and awarded the UNWTO Ulysses Award for the Innovation in Enterprises for his initiative project titled “Chanita ta di Fiesta” (Chanita is celebrating again, when translated from Papiamentu to English).

In Gino's own words it is an idea that came to him during a drive for a lunch



meeting with one of the Executive Chefs on the island, where he visualized a win-win scenario for both restaurants and local farmers, and at the same time preserving the island's local

identity.

As the recipient of the prestigious award of excellence Gino is humbled nevertheless very proud.

Continued on Page 16

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Alain and Ilka Mercier honored at the Amsterdam Manor

Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very nice couple whom are loyal and friendly visitors of Aruba, at the Amsterdam Manor, as Distinguished Visitors. The symbolic honorary title is presented in

the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 10-to-19 consecutive years.

The honorees were Alain and Ilka Mercier, from Solliouberg, Germany. Alain and Ilka love Aruba very



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much, because of the friendly people, the climate, beaches, restaurants and they feel like they are at home here with a big Aruban family. The cer-

tificate was presented by Ernest Giel, representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, together with Jurgen van Shaijk, GM at the Amsterdam Manor. □

At Aruba's Queen Beatrix Airport:

Princess Laurentien visits new Sculpture Garden



ORANJESTAD – Just a day ahead of its official unveiling Her Royal Highness Princess Laurentien got an

the general rehearsal being performed. Princess Laurentien got the opportunity to see original dance

Senchi, "Love is in the Air" by Osaira Muyale and "Message from the Cave" by Stanley Kuiperi.

The art pieces form a permanent exhibition that is open to the general public free of cost. They can be

seen daily at the airport's sculpture garden, located just behind the 14-Bis Restaurant. □



extensive preview of what now adorns the garden corridor of the Queen Beatrix International Airport. Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands is the wife of Prince Constantijn of the Netherlands, the third son of Queen Beatrix. She was in Aruba attending activities related to the International Childrens' Rights Day. Due to her official duties back in the Netherlands, she had to return a day ahead of the official unveiling of the art and sculpture pieces, however Her Royal Highness was very interested in contemporary art being displayed in public places and therefore gladly accepted the invitation of the CEO of the Aruba Airport Authority Peter Steinmetz to have a private presentation of the Sculptural Garden. This coincided beautifully with

performances. The dances were specially conceived for the unveilings of the sculptures by Club di Movimiento choreographer Samantha Westera and well known dance professionals and choreographers Alydia Wever and Wilma Kuiperi. The Aruba Airport Authority is patron to the Sculptural Garden and as such promotes and stimulates the context of artworks at the airport's public areas and aims to incorporate arts and culture of an elevated quality at the airport. The seven sculptures were given royal appreciation by the Princess, she admired "Dessert Fruit" by Ciro Abath, "Dancing with the Wind" by Miriam de L'Isle, "Double Nothing" by Ryan Oduber, "Look an Iguana" by Omaira Silva, "A Tribute to the Aruban People" by Gilbert

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Preferred RESIDENCES



Continued from page 13

The name "Chanita" derives from a local folk song composed by the honorable Mr. Hubert "Lio" Booï. The song lyrics describes an older Aruban lady who takes the fruits of her labor to market every day, to sell her local authentic dishes and delicacies in the city

of Oranjestad, Aruba. The goal of this project was initially to promote local authentic ingredients produced by farmers, in sync with the island's musical heritage. "We were hoping that with this fusion of food and music, we can create another opportunity to diversify our tourism portfolio," Gino explains.



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However, the main objective of the program remains the desire to enhance the collaboration between the tourism sector as represented by hotel restaurants and restaurants in general and local agriculture. "We are determined," says Gino, "to improve the linkages between locally produced foods, which our farmers can provide, and the people who put them to good use in kitchens. This strategic alliance will have a substantial influence on food production and consumption; moreover it will also enhance the overall gastronomic experience of tourists, complementing the traditional tourism portfolio of our small island destination, and reinforce a sustainable food supply chain for the island of Aruba," he concludes. The University of Aruba would like to thank the support from the Ministry of Tourism and Transportation, and Santa Rosa under the strong leadership of

Mrs. Nathalie Maduro, but would like to emphasize that the success of this project cannot be achieved without our strong partners in the private sector. These include The Hyatt Regency Aruba, White Modern Cuisine, La Cabana Beach & Racquet Club Aruba, who without any hesitation, believed in the concept. "We proudly receive this award today," Gino declares, "and we hope to further inspire similar alliances that will promote, enhance and protect all that is being produced locally."

Pictured here the press conference at the Renaissance Convention Center, with Glenn Thode, Rector University of Aruba, John Wardlaw, Vice Dean, Gerald "Gino" Kock, UA Faculty Member and Myrna Jansen, Senior Advisor to the Minister of Tourism, also pictured, Gerald "Gino" Kock during the second Chanita Di Fiesta event at White Modern Cuisine. □





Graeme McDowell celebrates with the trophy after winning the World Challenge golf tournament at Sherwood Country Club in Thousand Oaks, Calif., Sunday, Dec. 2, 2012.

Associated Press

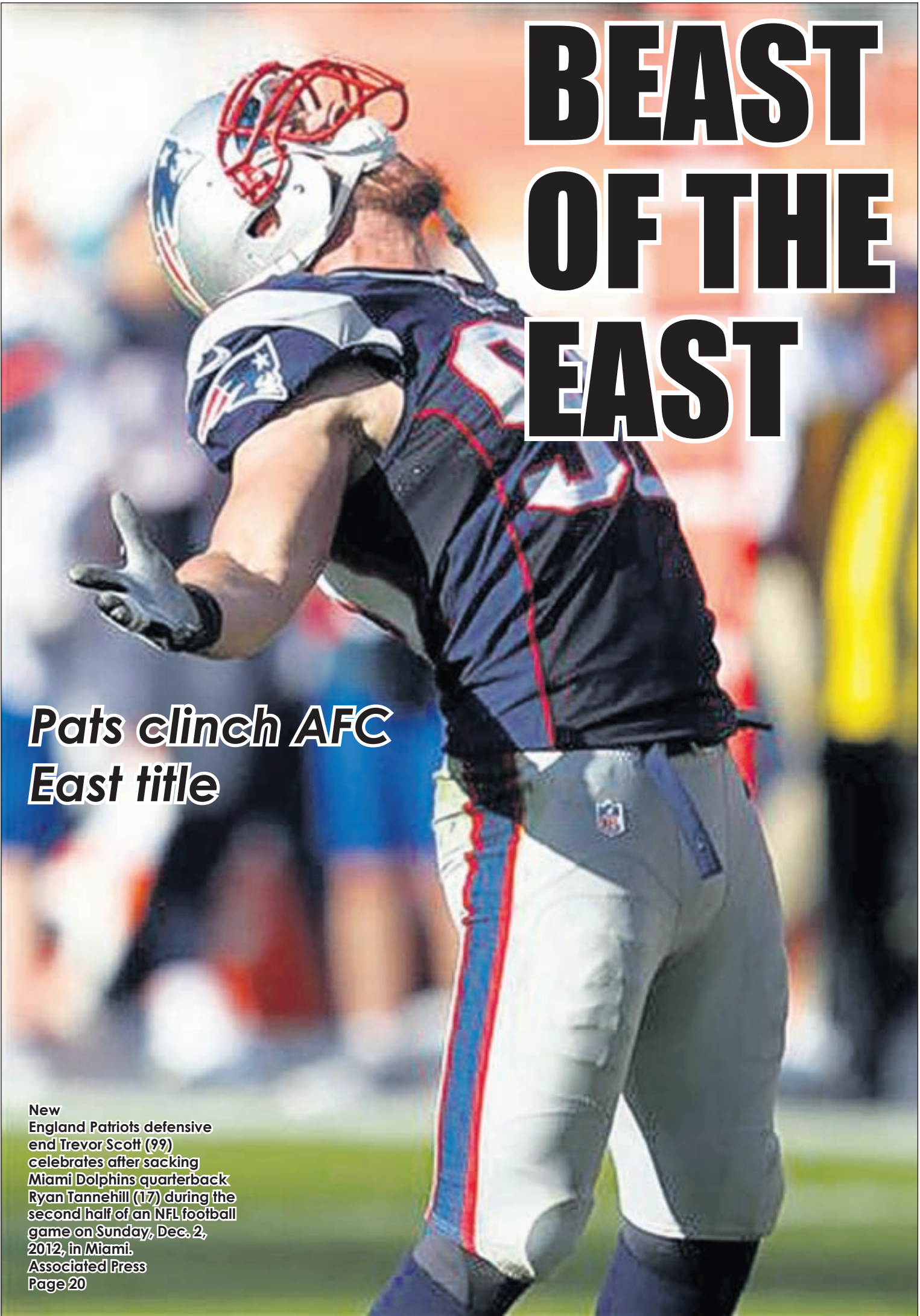
McDowell ends drought by winning World Challenge

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

THOUSAND OAKS, California (AP) — Graeme McDowell closed with a 4-under 68 to win the World Challenge by three shots on Sunday, his first title in two years. The Northern Irishman held off Keegan Bradley with a couple of key short-game shots on the back nine and finished with one last birdie he didn't need. Bradley, two shots behind with five holes to play, never got any closer. He wound up with a 69. Woods, the tournament host and defending champion, didn't make birdie until the 13th hole and closed with a 71 to tie for fourth. It was the 10th time in 12 rounds at Sherwood that McDowell has shot in the 60s, and he extended his dominance on the course that Jack Nicklaus carved out among the foothills of Conejo Valley. In three appearances, McDowell has won twice and was runner-up.

Continued on page 18



Pats clinch AFC East title

New England Patriots defensive end Trevor Scott (99) celebrates after sacking Miami Dolphins quarterback Ryan Tannehill (17) during the second half of an NFL football game on Sunday, Dec. 2, 2012, in Miami. Associated Press Page 20

Beckham in U.S.: He came, he sold, he conquered

RONALD BLUM
AP Sports Writer

David Beckham came, he sold, he conquered.

For the first two years after he joined the Los Angeles Galaxy in 2007, he was more of a brand than a player, his impact at America's cash registers far greater than any transformation on the field.

By the time the 37-year-old English midfielder played his final game in Major League Soccer on Saturday, he had achieved his footballing and his financial goals, winning two more titles and expanding the U.S. audience for his sport. He gained attention for his ability, and not just for his ever-changing hairstyles, Spice Girl wife and celebrity friends.

"When I decided to come here, I think I raised a little bit of interest, and I hope that's what I've done," Beckham said. "If that's the single thing that I've done, then great. But I think the foundations are there now in this league. It's a 17-year-old league and the foundations are great. It will continue to grow." The league expanded by about 50 percent, with



Los Angeles Galaxy's David Beckham, left, of England, kisses the trophy as he celebrates with Robbie Keane, or Ireland, after their 3-1 win in the MLS Cup championship soccer match against the Houston Dynamo in Carson, Calif., Saturday, Dec. 1, 2012.

Associated Press

new teams announced during the Beckham era that started play in San Jose (2008), Seattle (2009), Philadelphia (2010), Vancouver and Portland (2011), and Montreal (2012). That raised the total to 19.

Ground was broken for

football-specific stadiums in Houston, Kansas City and Philadelphia, the long-delayed venue in New Jersey was completed, and extensive renovations took place in Montreal, Portland and Vancouver.

MLS' regular-season atten-

dance averaged 15,504 in 2006, the last season before Beckham left Real Madrid to sign with the Galaxy. It was up to a record 18,807 this year, still well short of the record 44,293 set by the Bundesliga in 2011-12 and the 35,356 for England's Premier League.

Beckham said his goals were to win and increase awareness of the league both domestically and abroad.

"I don't think anybody would doubt that he has over-delivered on every one of those measures," MLS Commissioner Don Garber said. "There's arguably not a soccer fan on this planet that doesn't know the L.A. Galaxy and Major League Soccer, and David played a significant role in helping us make that happen."

He was an unbelievable ambassador for the league, for the Galaxy."

Beckham made his debut for Manchester United's first team in 1992, the year when he turned 17 and played alongside Ryan Giggs and Gary Neville for the Red Devils' winning team in the FA Youth Cup. At 21, he made his debut

for England.

He helped United win six Premier League titles, two FA Cups and the 1999 Champions League.

Sold to Real for 35 million euros (then \$41 million), he won Spain's La Liga in his fourth and final season.

By then, he had already announced he was moving to Los Angeles. While his handlers and the Galaxy hyped the deal as being worth "in excess \$250 million," it turned out to be a \$32.5 million, five-year contract. Still, he earned 50 times the league's average of \$129,395 in 2008 and twice as much as any other player.

Following his first Galaxy appearance, in a friendly against Chelsea, he was given a welcoming party hosted by Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art. A crowd of 46,686 showed up for his MLS debut on Aug. 9, 2007, at D.C. United.

While injuries limited his playing time, the five games he played averaged 37,659 fans — in a league where the overall average that year was 16,770. MLS jersey sales rose 780 percent. □

World Challenge

Continued from page 17

But this one was meaningful in its own right.

"This really caps off my season," McDowell said. "We try not to put winning on a pedestal, but this one feels very sweet because it's been a grind all year."

McDowell won for the first time since he beat Woods in a playoff at Sherwood to close out a dream season in 2010 that included his first major at the U.S. Open and the winning point for Europe at the Ryder Cup.

This win followed a year of frustration. He played in the final group of the U.S. Open and British Open but came up short, and he lost some enthusiasm going into tournaments late in the year. He talked all week about a 10-week break, some of it in Northern Ireland and the rest in Orlando, Fla., where

he just built a new house and he's opening a tavern outside the gates of Lake Nona.

It was the perfect way to leave golf for the next few months.

Bradley's birdie on the 13th hole for a two-shot swing brought him within two shots with five holes to play. McDowell never let him get any closer, however. He hit a beautiful lag putt from 75 feet just off the green at No. 14 for an easy par, then hit a chip from behind the 17th green that he was hopeful of getting within 6 feet of the cup. The ball was one turn from falling for birdie.

McDowell made a 6-foot birdie on the 18th that he didn't really need to finish on 17-under 271 and earn \$1 million against the 18-man field.

And he felt as though he earned it.

A light rain fell for much of



Tiger Woods walks to the green on the fourth hole during the final round of the World Challenge golf tournament at Sherwood Country Club in Thousand Oaks, Calif., Saturday, Dec. 2, 2012.

Associated Press

the round, as it has all week, making Sherwood play so long that McDowell had to hit a 5-wood into the par-4 fourth hole, and a 4-iron for his third shot in the par-5 fifth. His only bogey over the final 47 holes of the tournament came on the 13th hole.

"Certainly I will draw some

confidence from this one," McDowell said. "The game hasn't given me a huge amount this year."

Woods needed a fast start and was stuck in neutral. He failed to birdie the par 5s on the front nine and dropped a shot on the seventh hole when his flop shot below the green came out heavy.

He didn't make his first birdie until the par-5 13th.

"I struggled with my game a little bit this week," said Woods, playing for the first time in five weeks. "I just managed myself well to get around in these conditions."

But this was a duel from the start.

McDowell started with a two-shot lead and kept his distance until Bradley holed an 18-foot birdie putt on the fifth. Bradley made back-to-back bogeys at the turn to fall three shots behind, and McDowell stretched his lead to four shots by starting the back nine with two quick birdies. The par-5 13th then set the stage for a nervous final hour.

McDowell laid up, hit a poor wedge and then three-putted for bogey, ending his streak of 41 consecutive holes at Sherwood at par or better. □

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Ligety wins giant slalom with blazing final run

PAT GRAHAM

AP Sports Writer

BEAVER CREEK, Colorado

(AP) — Ted Ligety of the United States easily won his second straight World Cup giant slalom race with a flawless final run on Sunday.

Ligety finished in a combined time of 2 minutes, 25.59 seconds, holding off top rival Marcel Hirscher of Austria by 1.76 seconds. Davide Simioncelli of Italy was third.

"Ted is Mr. GS," Hirscher said. "He should have to ski two or three gates more than the other skiers."

Unbeatable?

"At the moment, yes," Hirscher said.

The last racer of the day, Ligety gained speed throughout the tricky course and built on his first-run advantage. Soon after finishing off his blazing run, Ligety bowed down and kissed the snow.

"Ted's on a different level," Simioncelli said. Indeed. Although, Ligety doesn't see

it that way.

"I'm skiing fast. But I don't know if I'm skiing at a different level," he said. "If I keep skiing this fast, then, I guess, yeah, it's mostly me that's going to get in my own way. I think those guys have a chance to get up there and tackle me and take me down. I think it will be tough races ahead."

Ligety expected the rule changes altering the shape of giant slalom skis would make them more difficult to turn and far less forgiving. That's why he was so outspoken when the International Ski Federation implemented equipment changes this season to make the discipline safer. The new skis require extreme exertion and patience. But there's something Ligety really didn't expect: He'd be faster than the field. Not by a little bit, either, but by chunks of time. Ligety won the season opening GS in Soelden, Austria, in late October. He demolished the competi-

tion, winning by 2.75 seconds — the biggest winning margin since 1979. On Sunday, Ligety turned in the fastest time of the first run and picked back up where he left off on the final pass. Must be the new skis, right? "No. He is just an excellent skier," Hirscher said. "He is the fastest GS skier right now." □



Ted Ligety from the United States, speeds down the course during the men's World Cup giant slalom ski race in Beaver Creek, Colo., on Sunday, Dec. 2, 2012. Associated Press

Vonn races to 2nd straight Lake Louise hat trick

LAKE LOUISE, Alberta (AP)

— Lindsey Vonn completed a hat trick of World Cup victories at Lake Louise for the second straight year on Sunday.

Vonn won the day's super-G in a time of 1 minute, 22.82 seconds, having also triumphed in the two downhill races on Friday and Saturday.

American teammate Julia Mancuso was second in the super-G in 1:23.25, while Anna Fenninger of Austria was third in 1:23.27. Vonn's victory was her 14th career win at Lake Louise. □



Lindsey Vonn of the United States reacts in the finish area following her run at the women's World Cup Super-G ski race in Lake Louise, Alberta Sunday, Dec. 2, 2012.

Associated Press

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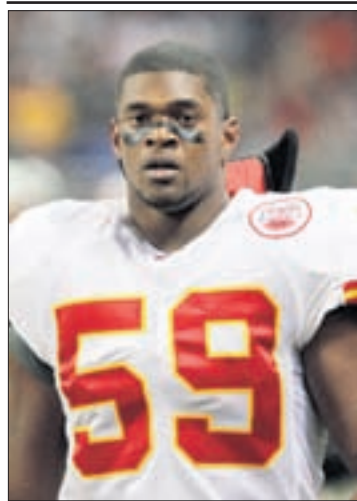
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silence after player murder-suicide

In this Dec. 19, 2010, file photo, Kansas City Chiefs linebacker Jovan Belcher (59) walks off the field during the third quarter of an NFL football game against the St. Louis Rams in St. Louis.

Associated Press

BILL DRAPER

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Missouri (AP)

— Before the Kansas City Chiefs kicked off their game Sunday, fans at Arrowhead Stadium observed a moment of silence for the victims of domestic violence and their families.

Not mentioned was Jovan Belcher, the Chiefs linebacker who killed his girlfriend and then himself a day earlier, across the parking lot from the stadium. Barely more than 24 hours later, fans grilled, played catch and enjoyed beverages on an unseasonably warm and sunny day.

The festive atmosphere masked some of the pain Chiefs fans felt after hearing that Belcher had killed 22-year-old Kasandra M. Perkins, then drove to the team practice facility and turned the gun on himself. The couple had an infant daughter.

Coach Romeo Crennel and general manager Scott Pioli had tried to stop Belcher, and watched powerless as he shot himself in the head after thanking both of them for giving him a chance in the NFL.

"To have to witness that, I don't think you would wish that on your worst enemy," Chiefs fan Ty Rowton said. "That memory will never, ever leave them." □

Chiefs beats Panthers at somber Arrowhead

NFL Capsules

KANSAS CITY, Missouri (AP)

— Against the backdrop of an unthinkable tragedy, the Kansas City Chiefs

the-punter penalty and fumble by Miami led to 17 New England points, and another penalty negated a Dolphins touchdown. Brady finished 24 for 40 for

BRONCOS 31, BUCCANEERS 23

DENVER (AP) — Peyton Manning threw three touchdowns, including one to defensive tackle Mitch

an errant pitchout by Colin Kaepernick 2 yards for a score. They've won two straight after an 0-4-1 skid. The 49ers (8-3-1) failed to take advantage of a 14-yard punt by rookie punter Johnny Hekker to midfield when David Akers was barely wide right on a 51-yard attempt with 4:11 to go in overtime. Akers is just 7 for 15 from 40 yards and beyond.

SEAHAWKS 23, BEARS 17, OT

CHICAGO (AP) — Russell Wilson connected with Sidney Rice on a 13-yard touchdown with 7:33 left in overtime to lift Seattle.

Unbeaten in five home games, the Seahawks finally figured a way to win on the road after dropping five of their first six, and knocked off the NFC North leaders in the process.

Seattle took a short-lived lead late in regulation on Wilson's 14-yard pass to Golden Tate, only to watch the Bears' Robbie Gould boot a 46-yard field goal as time expired to send it into OT.

The Seahawks (7-5) got their only other road win at Carolina.

COLTS 35, LIONS 33

DETROIT (AP) — Andrew Luck threw a 14-yard touchdown pass to Donnie Avery with no time left to lift Indianapolis.

With the final seconds ticking away, the rookie quarterback moved up in the pocket, flipped a short pass to Avery, and the receiver ran untouched into the end zone to complete a rally that started with Lions up 12 points midway through the fourth quarter. The Colts (8-4) stayed in control of the AFC wildcard race with the win. Detroit (4-8) lost for the fourth straight time, including three in a row at home after leading in the final quarter.

PACKERS 23, VIKINGS 14

GREEN BAY, Wisconsin

(AP) — James Starks had Green Bay's first rushing touchdown in almost two months, Morgan Burnett picked off Christian Ponder twice and the Packers overcame a monster day by Adrian Peterson. □



Kansas City Chiefs wide receiver Dwayne Bowe (82) is tackled by Carolina Panthers defensive back Josh Thomas (22) during the first half of an NFL football game at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City, Mo., Sunday, Dec. 2, 2012.

Associated Press

gave themselves a reason to be proud Sunday — and perhaps the impetus to let the healing begin.

Brady Quinn threw for 201 yards and two touchdowns, and Jamaal Charles ran for 127 yards in the Chiefs' 27-21 victory over their Carolina Panthers. The win snapped an eight-game losing streak during one of the most difficult seasons the franchise has ever experienced.

The win came just one day after Chiefs linebacker Jovan Belcher shot his girlfriend multiple times at a residence near Arrowhead Stadium, then drove to the team's practice facility and turned the gun on himself as general manager Scott Pioli and coach Romeo Crennel looked on. Pioli walked through the press box before the game and said he was doing "OK," though he didn't stop to talk. Crennel was on the sideline coaching his team to an uplifting victory. **PATRIOTS 23, DOLPHINS 16** **MIAMI (AP)** — Tom Brady had his least efficient game of the year and even threw an interception, but New England took advantage of Miami's mistakes and clinched their fourth consecutive AFC East title.

A botched punt, roughing-

238 yards and was sacked four times. But with the Patriots nursing a 20-13 lead midway through the fourth quarter, he led a 16-play drive that took more than seven minutes and led to a field goal.

The Patriots (9-3) have won six games in a row and are assured of their 12th consecutive winning season. Miami (5-7) lost to New England for the fifth consecutive time.

TEXANS 24, TITANS 10

NASHVILLE, Tennessee

(AP) — The Houston Texans clinched their second straight playoff berth and set a franchise record for wins in a season.

Rookie linebacker Whitney Mercilus recovered a fumble and had two sacks, and the Texans (11-1) remain tied with Atlanta for the best record in the NFL with their sixth straight win. After needing overtime the past two games, the Texans forced six turnovers and had six sacks of Jake Locker when they weren't batting down a handful of other passes.

The Texans swept Tennessee (4-8), the team they replaced in Houston, for only the second time. Matt Schaub threw for 207 yards and two touchdowns, and Arian Foster ran for a TD.

Unrein, to help Denver wrap up the AFC West.

The Broncos (9-3) won their seventh straight and the Tampa Bay (6-6) loss clinched the NFC South for Atlanta, which won on Thursday.

Manning threw for 242 yards. He now has 29 touchdown passes on the season, moving past Jake Plummer and John Elway for the most by a Denver quarterback in a single year.

Manning threw two of the scores to Demaryius Thomas, who finished with eight catches for 99 yards.

Broncos linebacker Von Miller returned an interception for his first NFL score.

The Broncos held Tampa running back Doug Martin to 56 yards on 18 carries.

RAMS 16, 49ERS 13, OT

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Rookie Greg Zuerlein kicked a 54-yard field goal with 26 seconds left in overtime after booting a 53-yarder as time expired in regulation.

The winning kick allowed the Rams to avoid a second tie in three weeks against the NFC West leaders.

The Rams (5-6-1) scored twice in the final 3:04 of regulation, getting their lone touchdown when rookie Janoris Jenkins returned

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Knicks beat Suns 106-99, stay unbeaten at home

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK (AP) — Carmelo Anthony scored 34 points as the New York Knicks won their third straight game and remained unbeaten at home with a 106-99 victory over the Phoenix Suns on Sunday.

Raymond Felton had 23 points, seven assists and no turnovers for the Knicks, who are 7-0 at Madison Square Garden and 12-4 overall, a half-game behind Miami for the best record in the Eastern Conference.

They got off to a good start in December after winning 11 in November for the first time since a 12-victory November in 1972 on the way to their last NBA championship.

Tyson Chandler finished with 15 points and 13 rebounds. The Knick also shook off the first ejection of Rasheed Wallace's comeback — after a mere 1:25 of playing time — that left them short-handed. Jason Kidd missed a fourth straight game with lower back spasms.

Marcin Gortat had 18 points and 10 rebounds for the Suns, who dropped their third straight and fell to 1-4 on their season-high, six-game road trip that ends Tuesday in Memphis. Shannon Brown scored 17 points.

Phoenix had won its last two at MSG but the Knicks have finally figured out under coach Mike Woodson that home-court games are not to be wasted. They are 18-1 in the regular season here since he took over last March, jumping on

their last few opponents from the start.

The Suns have trailed by double digits in 14 of their 18 games and were already down 10 just 4:18 into the game. The Knicks seemed well on their way to eclipsing their NBA-best average of 27.5 points per first quarter when they jumped ahead 21-6 with 5:15 left in the period.

But they got bogged down committing fouls, including one on Wallace against Luis Scola. Wallace was hit with a technical foul, then after Goran Dragic missed the free throw, yelled "Ball don't lie!" — his way of saying the call was proven wrong — and whistled for another to pick up his 31st career ejection, according to STATS, LLC.

Wallace has been called for more than 300 technical fouls in his career and led the league seven times, but said he was too

old to be clashing with officials at age 38 when he ended a two-year retirement. But he's up to four for the season now, one off the league lead.

The Suns pulled within 24-20 after one before the Knicks broke it open again late in the second with an 11-2 spurt that gave them a 59-39 lead with 24 seconds left in the half.

But the game got close a few times in the second half.

Phoenix had the ball with a chance to get within 10 in the final minute of the third but Gortat was whistled for an offensive foul. The Knicks then scored the next five points, taking an 89-72 lead to the fourth after Anthony made a 3-pointer with 2.8 seconds left.

The Suns made a charge to open the fourth, pulling within 93-85 on Jared Dudley's 3-pointer midway through the period. □



New York Knicks' Rasheed Wallace, left, argues with referee John Goble after being given a technical foul in the first quarter of the NBA basketball game against the Phoenix Suns in New York, Sunday, Dec. 2, 2012. Wallace was given a second technical and ejected from the game.

Associated Press

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South Africa makes progress in HIV, AIDS fight

CARLEY PETESCH

Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — In

the early '90s when South Africa's Themba Lethu clinic could only treat HIV/AIDS patients for opportunistic diseases, many would come in on wheelchairs and keep coming to the health center until they died.

Two decades later the clinic is the biggest anti-retroviral, or ARV, treatment center in the country and sees between 600 to 800 patients a day from all over southern Africa. Those who are brought in on wheelchairs, sometimes on the brink of death, get the crucial drugs and often become healthy and are walking within weeks.

"The ARVs are called the 'Lazarus drug' because people rise up and walk," said Sue Roberts who has been a nurse at the clinic, run by Right to Care in Johannesburg's Helen Joseph Hospital, since it opened its doors in 1992. She said they recently treated a woman who was pushed in a

wheelchair for 3 kilometers (1.8 miles) to avoid a taxi fare and who was so sick it was touch and go. Two

2012 in sub-Saharan Africa where deaths from AIDS-related causes have declined by 32 percent from

fections, the growth of the clinic, which was one of only a few to open its doors 20 years ago, reflects how

at 5.6 million, still faces stigma and high rates of infection.

"You have no idea what a beautiful time we're living in right now," said one of the doctors at the clinic, Dr. Kay Mahomed, over the chatter of a crowd of patients outside her door.

President Jacob Zuma's government decided to give the best care, including TB screening and care at the clinic, and not to look at the cost, she said. South Africa has increased the numbers treated for HIV by 75 percent in the last two years, UNAIDS said, and new HIV infections have fallen by more than 50,000 in those two years. South Africa has also increased its domestic expenditure on AIDS to \$1.6 billion, the highest by any low-and middle-income country, the group said.

Themba Lethu clinic, with funding from the government, the United States Agency for International Development and the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, is now among some 2,500 anti-retroviral therapy facilities in the country that treat approximately 1.9 million people.

"Now, you can't not get better. It's just one of these win-win situations. You test, you treat and you get better, end of story," Mahomed said.

But it hasn't always been that way.

In the 1990s South Africa's problem was compounded by years of misinformation by President Thabo Mbeki, who questioned the link between HIV and AIDS, and his health minister, Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, who promoted a "treatment" of beets and garlic. □



Tshepo Hoato, left, and colleague, Mongezi Sosibo, pose for a photo in Johannesburg. The two help run a support group for teens at the US sponsored Themba Lethu, HIV/AIDS Clinic, at the Helen Joseph hospital, in Johannesburg. (AP Photo/Denis Farrell)

weeks later, the woman walked to the clinic, Roberts said.

Such stories of hope and progress are readily available on World AIDS Day

1.8 million in 2005 to 1.2 million in 2011, according to the latest UNAIDS report.

As people around the world celebrate a reduction in the rate of HIV in-

changes in treatment and attitude toward HIV and AIDS have moved South Africa forward. The nation, which has the most people living with HIV in the world

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Trained Navy dolphins losing out to robots

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Some dolphins used by the Navy to track down mines will soon lose their jobs to robots — but they'll be re-assigned, not retired. Starting in 2017, 24 of the Navy's 80 military-trained dolphins will be replaced by a 12-foot unmanned torpedo-shaped vehicle, according to the newspaper UT San Diego. The military said the machines can do some of the same mine-hunting duties as the sea creatures. And they can be manufactured quickly, unlike the seven years it takes to train a dolphin. But the dolphins won't be relieved of duty. They'll be used along with sea lions for port security and retrieving objects from the sea floor, the newspaper reported. The Navy's \$28 million marine-mammal program dates back to the late 1950s and once included killer whales and sharks. Based in San Diego, it currently uses 80 bottle-nosed dolphins and 40 California sea lions. In recent years, dolphins have been deployed to Iraq and Bahrain to patrol for enemy divers and mark the locations of mines. Using their innate sonar, the mammals find and mark mines in shallow water, in deep water when tethers are used, and on the bottom where sediment cover and plant growth can hide the devices. Dolphins are carried aboard Navy ships in large movable pools, about 20 feet in diameter. Dolphins traveled on the amphibious ship Gunston Hall in 2003 for the Iraq war. Most of the Navy's dolphins



Graduate student Baker Potts handles a prototype robotic eel in a pool inside the engineering building at the University of New Orleans Tuesday, Oct. 2, 2012 in New Orleans. The robotic eel might be able to wriggle through dangerous waters with almost no wake, letting it move on little power and with little chance of radar detection as it looks for underwater mines.
 Associated Press

and sea lions are housed at Point Loma Naval Base, in pools sectioned off from the bay. Others guard Navy submarine bases in Georgia and Washington state, according to UT San Diego. The military is responsible for the mammals' care throughout their lives, even after they're retired from active duty. Sometimes Navy dolphins are loaned to animal parks, such as Sea World, later in life. □

A feisty start-up is met with regulatory snarl

By BRIAN X. CHEN
WASHINGTON — Summoning a taxi or car service with your smartphone feels like the future. City governments around the world can agree on that. But many of them are proposing new rules that would run Uber, one of the most prominent ride-requesting apps, off the road. The battle between Uber and city governments underscores the tension between lawmakers and technology companies at a time when Web sites and mobile apps can outmaneuver old rules. At a recent conference here, transportation regulators and car service operators from cities in the United States and Europe met to talk about how smartphone apps were changing the hire-a-car business. Some of these apps are integrated with dispatching systems run by the car companies, while others allow drivers to directly connect with passengers, phone to phone. While the regulators discussed ways to clarify the legality of these apps, they also proposed guidelines that would effectively force Uber, a San Francisco start-up, to cease operations in the United States. Uber also faces new lawsuits filed by San Francisco cabdrivers and Chicago car service companies, and a \$20,000 fine from the California Public Utilities Commission. The battle between Uber and city governments underscores the tension between lawmakers and



The Uber car-hiring app was introduced in Sydney last month. Jack Atley for The New York Times

technology companies at a time when Web sites and mobile apps can outmaneuver old rules. Services like Uber, Airbnb and Craigslist can cut out the middleman and lead to more efficient markets. But regulators say they could also put consumers at risk. Uber has rattled regulators in many cities with its unusu-

al approach to expansion. It says that it first consults a transportation lawyer in a city on whether it is legal to operate there. When it comes to town, its employees contact local car service companies to discuss working with them; in cities where Uber works with cabs, employees put up fliers or approach drivers at airports and gas stations. □



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Spain's elBulli restaurant to sell wine cellar

HAROLD HECKLE
Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — Spain's famed chef Ferran Adria on Saturday said the contents of the wine cellar of his former restaurant, elBulli, will be auctioned off next year to raise funds for his new project. ElBulli served its last supper and closed in July 2011, with Adria and business partner Juli Soler planning to establish "an experimental center looking at the process of innovation and creativity." Adria told The Associated Press the sale will raise funds for the foundation. "In around a month's time, the full list of wines will be published," Adria said. "I don't really know that much about wine, I drink and enjoy them, but that's about as far as it goes." He said many bottles were signed by producers and all would carry an elBulli Foundation identifying label. Sotheby's auction house said in a statement that more than 8,800 bottles from elBulli's cellar would be auctioned with a view to raising an estimated \$1.6 million. El

Bulli maintained an almost unattainable Michelin three-star status for over a decade and was rated the world's best restaurant five times by British magazine The Restaurant, with Adria often being cited as

Bulli in 1981, Soler became an essential figure in what became one of the world's most influential restaurants. Serena Sutcliffe, head of Sotheby's international wine department, said those lucky enough to have dined

bliss," she said. Sutcliffe added that the food, which she described as all the secrets of smoke, foam and spheres of liquid involving melon to olives, was intuitively paired with "enticing and phenomenally interesting" wines. The auctions, due to take place in Hong Kong on April 3 and New York on April 26, will offer connoisseurs an opportunity to buy a treasure trove, including continuous vintages of some of the world's most exclusive wines. Examples include five vintages of Spain's Vega Sicilia "Unico," nine vintages of the rare Pingus and five vintages of Romanee Conti, the world's most sought-after red Burgundy. Bordeaux wines, which many experts consider to be among the most collectable wines anywhere, are also present. "All five First Growths are present in multiple vintages highlighted by full cases of bottles and magnums of Chateau Latour," the Sotheby's statement said. □



Spain's famed chef Ferran Adria says the wine cellar of his former restaurant, elBulli is to be auctioned to raise funds for his new project, the elBulli Foundation.

(AP Photo/Bernat Armangué)

the world's most talented and imaginative chef. In October, Soler, the maitre d' who discovered and signed up Adria, resigned from the elBulli Foundation after being diagnosed with a neuro-degenerative disease. Since his arrival at El

at elBulli will never forget the extraordinary sensations experienced there. "There was surprise, delight and elation in every dish, a seamless procession of magic that opened up before one's eyes, only to disappear in a moment of

Reports:

Delta wants Virgin stake

NEW YORK (AP) -- Delta Air Lines Inc. is mulling the purchase of a 49 percent stake in British airline Virgin Atlantic Airways from Singapore Airlines Ltd., according to media reports. The remaining 51 percent of Virgin Atlantic is owned by billionaire Richard Branson, who founded the airline in 1984.

Singapore has been considering selling its stake in Virgin for several years and has talked with Delta about a sale in the past, according to the Wall Street Journal.

Virgin has been looking for a possible suitor, too.

It hired investment firm Deutsche Bank in 2010 to explore its options.

Buying Virgin is attractive to a carrier like Delta because of its potential to unlock more access to London's Heathrow airport, a key international gateway. Virgin is the second-biggest airline there after British Airways. □

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Wall Street Week Ahead:

Money pours into junk bonds; but is it too much?

MATTHEW CRAFT

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) —

The money manager's job is supposed to be straightforward: Take people's cash and put it to work. The more money that comes in, the bigger the manager's paycheck.

So why would two of the country's largest fund managers tell would-be investors in junk bonds, the common name for bonds issued by companies with the lowest credit ratings, to go away?

The short answer is that it's for their own good. The market for junk bonds, the pros say, has become so popular that it's dangerous. Thanks largely to the unsteady economy, interest rates on U.S. government bonds have fallen to record lows. And individual investors remain leery of the stock market.

Desperate for better returns, they're sinking billions into higher-paying bonds backed by businesses with bad credit scores. Those deeply indebted companies have borrowed a record amount from investors and are increasingly using the money in ways that could strain their ability to pay it back.

Earlier this year, two mutual fund giants, T. Rowe Price and Vanguard, began turning down people hoping to invest in funds that buy junk bonds. Both said they were running out of worthwhile places to put customer money.

"It's getting harder and harder to find places to invest," says Michael Gitlin, director of fixed-income at T. Rowe Price. He says

investors are getting paid record-low interest rates for taking on much more risk. Consider the numbers:

— Junk-bond sales in the U.S. snapped the single-year record in October and have kept climbing. Sales for the year totaled \$324 billion as of Nov. 28, according to Dealogic, a data provider. In the three years leading up to the 2008 financial crisis, a time

\$85 billion from U.S. stock funds, according to Morningstar. — Over the past 10 years, individual investors have dropped \$96 billion into the junk bond market, according to a Vanguard research paper. The bulk of it, 77 percent, was deposited in the past three years. All that money has started to change things. For a while, falling borrowing costs and willing lenders

so far. Over the past year, just 2.8 percent of low-rated companies have missed an interest payment and defaulted, according to Standard & Poor's. That's roughly half the long-term average. Dig deeper and the numbers don't look as encouraging. For corporate borrowers with the worst ratings, the same ones taking up a larger share of the market, the figure is 27 percent. Gitlin and others say recent trends remind them of the easy-lending era before the financial crisis, when Wall Street and bond traders treated caution as a sign of

weakness. "When you start seeing things like you saw in '06 and '07, you should be concerned," Gitlin says.

Over recent months, more than a third of the money raised in the market has gone to corporate borrowers that credit rating agencies consider likely candidates for bankruptcy, those with the lowest of the low credit scores, according to S&P. Where the money winds up has changed, too. Some of it simply fuels deal-making by private equity firms, investment groups like Bain Capital and The Carlyle Group that buy and sell businesses. □



Earlier this year, mutual fund giants T. Rowe Price and Vanguard began turning down people hoping to invest in funds that buy junk bonds. Both said they were running out of worthwhile places to put customer money. (Handout Photo)

marked by easy lending, companies with junk credit ratings sold an average of \$144 billion each year.

— Companies are lining up to sell bonds because borrowing rates have never been lower. The typical company rated "speculative-grade," one of the polite names for junk, pays 6.6 percent to borrow in the bond market. The average over the past decade was 9.2 percent, according to T. Rowe Price research.

— Demand for junk has remained strong. Individual investors, people saving for retirement or building a nest egg, have put \$28 billion into U.S. junk bond funds this year while pulling

prevented many troubled companies from sinking into bankruptcy. Well-known companies such as Caesars Entertainment and the parent of Century 21, Realogy, sold bonds at low rates, used the cash to pay down other expensive loans and avoided defaulting on their debts.

But what's good for borrowers can eventually be dangerous to investors. Fund managers and analysts now warn that the seemingly boundless appetite for bonds has eroded lending standards. Companies with shaky credit scores can borrow on easier terms for questionable purposes. Few have run into trouble

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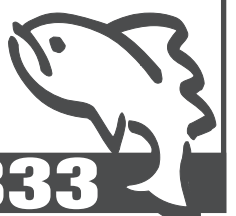


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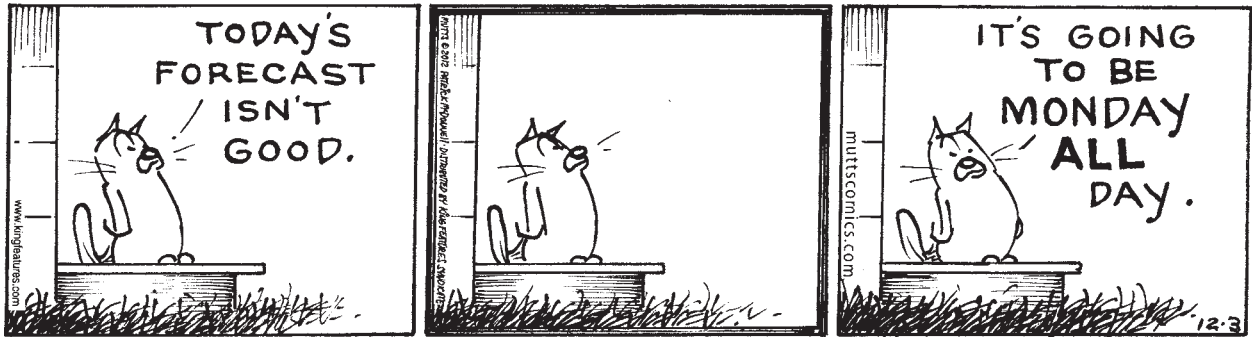
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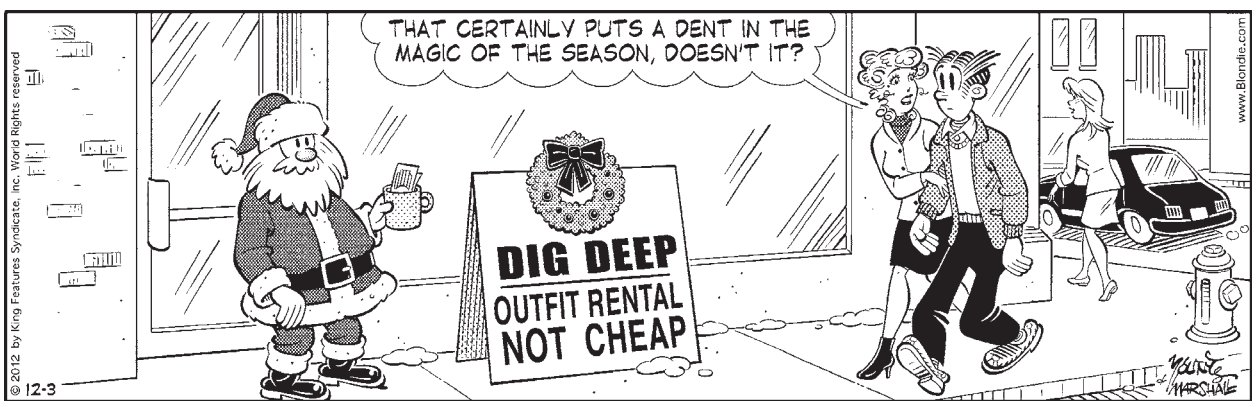
Mutts



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Conceptis Sudoku

				5		2		
		5	4	6		3		
	6		3			1		8
	4	8		1				
2	1						4	3
				9		8	7	
4		1			5		9	
	3			4	8	6		
		7		3				

Difficulty Level ★ 12/03

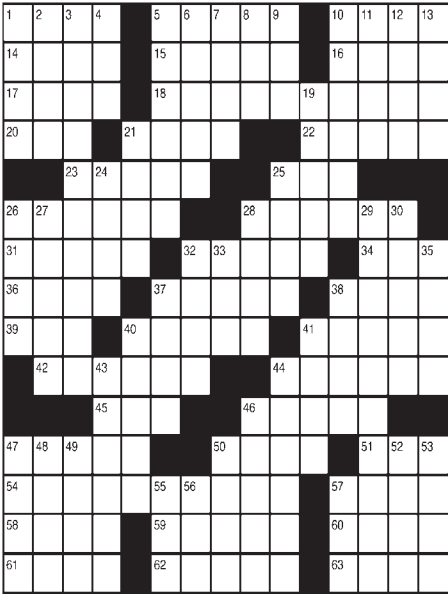
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Saturday's puzzle answer

7	8	2	3	5	9	4	1	6
3	1	9	2	4	6	8	7	5
4	6	5	7	1	8	2	9	3
1	2	3	9	7	4	5	6	8
6	7	8	5	3	2	1	4	9
9	5	4	8	6	1	3	2	7
2	3	7	4	9	5	6	8	1
5	4	1	6	8	7	9	3	2
8	9	6	1	2	3	7	5	4

ACROSS

- 1 Impolite
- 5 Move stealthily
- 10 Surgery memento
- 14 Bullring cheers
- 15 Forbidden
- 16 Gray wolf
- 17 Small bills
- 18 At first
- 20 Mothers
- 21 Stir-fry pans
- 22 Mountains of South America
- 23 United States Marine
- 25 White termite
- 26 Molds; forms
- 28 Hoses down
- 31 Reddy or Hunt
- 32 Temperamental
- 34 Soft wet soil
- 36 Nation in the Middle East
- 37 Tour leader
- 38 Rider's fee
- 39 "All that glitters is gold"
- 40 Actress Berry
- 41 Stove
- 42 Discussion of pros and cons
- 44 Main sport in England
- 45 Recline
- 46 Singer LaBelle
- 47 TV's Paula
- 50 one's time; wait patiently
- 51 Item in a set of cookware
- 54 with; write to
- 57 Coffee
- 58 Sixty minutes
- 59 Give a speech
- 60 Thing; article
- 61 TV show award
- 62 Mike or Cicely
- 63 Trait transmitter



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews 12/3/12

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

YOU		AORTA		STAB
INTO		GROAN		HERE
PEAR		RABBI		ORES
		SHAMELESS		GNAT
		TOES		EMU
STAIRS		BOTANIST		
COLON		BRUTE		RHO
AKIN		CAUSE		LIED
REV		ELECT		POSED
ENERGIZE		EIGHTY		
		WON		PANG
INCA		CHRISTINA		
DEAN		HAUNT		NODS
LEAD		ELITE		GAZA
EDNA		SEÑOR		HEN

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DOWN

- 1 Kitchen or den
- 2 Arm bone
- 3 Decrease in size or scope
- 4 Suffix for host or count
- 5 Bends down
- 6 Songbirds
- 7 Wading bird
- 8 Egg drink
- 9 Pond fish
- 10 Leans
- 11 Freezing
- 12 Competent
- 13 Rogers & Clark
- 19 Female goat
- 21 Architect Christopher
- 24 Unlock
- 25 Helper
- 26 Part of the leg
- 27 Ruler who ordered John the Baptist beheaded
- 28 off; galloped away
- 29 Set free
- 30 Sudden increase
- 32 Stubborn as a
- 33 Liquid grease
- 35 Stag or doe
- 37 Fence opening

- 38 In truly
- 40 Ethiopia's Selassie
- 41 Learn by memorize
- 43 Fuzzy; obscure
- 44 Depress
- 46 Popular 1970s Ford model
- 47 Pain
- 48 Explosive noise
- 49 Tom-tom, e.g.
- 50 Deadly snakes
- 52 Microwave
- 53 Make gentle
- 55 Topsy one
- 56 Use a crowbar
- 57 Irish dance

Model wins distinct honor for Brazil's best-shaped buttocks

SAO PAULO (AP) — A shapely blonde model from northern Brazil has won a different kind of beauty pageant. Over the weekend, 25-year-old Carine Felizardo was crowned this year's Miss Bumbum — Portuguese slang for buttocks. A 10-person jury decided Felizardo had Brazil's best-shaped and sexiest derriere. Wearing a skimpy white string bikini and a golden sash with "Miss Bumbum 2012" in green letters, Felizardo told the audience: "Working out at the gym for 10 years has paid off." "I feel fully realized. I really did not expect to win. It is a dream come true," she said. Felizardo was one of 15 finalists chosen through online voting among 27 contestants representing each of Brazil's states. She won a top prize of 5,000 reals (\$2,500). □



Carine Felizardo was crowned this year's "Miss Bumbum 2012." (Photo)



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KELLI KENNEDY
SUZETTE LABOY
Associated Press

"They get big. They're vicious. The animals are just more aggressive and they learn that humans are easy targets," said Joe



But the Nile croc currently at large is only a little over three feet (one meter) long, not dangerous yet. Still, federal wildlife officials have dispatched a team to kill the animal before it becomes a problem. Wildlife officials have tried to capture it with a noose or harpoon, but now realize their only chance to kill it will likely be with a rifle, said FWC nonnative wildlife bi-

His team has spent more than 1,000 hours and endless nights searching by boats and on foot in the canal where the croc was

He sneaked up on and caught a sunbathing Nile croc about six months ago at a park not far from the

Official records on Nile croc sightings in the state are sketchy, but there have been a handful. Houdini, a nine-foot long, 10-year-old Nile crocodile, escaped from Billie Swamp Safari on Seminole Tribe reservation lands. But he was recaptured a few years ago as part of the "Swamp Men" cable television show and relocated to a facility on Florida's west coast. Seminole Tribe spokesman Gary Bitner said they haven't seen any other Nile crocs on their reservation lands. "It's a couple of animals. I don't think it's a plague," Wasilewski said. □

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'Twilight,' 'Skyfall' remain top picks for fans

DAVID GERMAIN

AP Movie Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The "Twilight" finale and "Skyfall" continued to dominate the box office on a typically slow post-Thanksgiving holiday weekend that brought big business for holdover films but a poor start for Brad Pitt's new crime story. Sunday studio estimates put "The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn — Part 2" out front for the third-straight weekend with \$17.4 million domestically. That raised the domestic total to \$254.6 million for the vampire tale released by Lionsgate banner Summit Entertainment. The movie added \$48.4 million overseas for an international haul of \$447.8 million and a worldwide sum of \$702.4 million, approaching the franchise record of \$710 million for last year's "Breaking Dawn — Part 2." Sony's James Bond adventure "Skyfall" was a fraction

behind with \$17 million domestically, raising revenue to \$246 million after four weekends. "Skyfall" also brought in \$34 million overseas to put its international take at \$623 million and the worldwide total at \$869 million, the best cash haul ever for a Bond flick. Pitt's "Killing Them Softly," the weekend's top new release, tanked with just \$7 million domestically, coming in at No. 7 behind a big batch of holdovers. The "Twilight" finale and "Skyfall" were close enough that domestic rankings could flip-flop when final numbers are released Monday. Either way, the two movies have led a brisk start to the holiday season that could lift Hollywood to record domestic revenues for the year. "I keep upping my revenue estimates for the full end-of-year box office because it's just been a lot stronger than anticipated lately," said Paul

Dergarabedian, analyst for box-office tracker Hollywood.com. With domestic business totaling \$9.9 billion so far in 2012, receipts are running 6 percent ahead of last year's and are on track to top the record of \$10.6 billion set in 2009, according to Hollywood.com. After record revenue over Thanksgiving, business eased off, though it still was a stronger-than-usual post-holiday weekend. Domestic revenues totaled \$115 million, up 42 percent from the same weekend last year, when "Breaking Dawn — Part 1" led with \$16.5 million. A Weinstein Co. release, "Killing Them Softly" averaged just \$2,888 in 2,424 theaters, meager results compared to the "Twilight" finale's average of \$4,344 in 4,008 cinemas over its third weekend. Adapted from George V. Higgins' novel "Cogan's Trade," "Killing Them Softly" stars Pitt as a gang en-



This Oct. 22, 2012 file photo shows British actor Robert Pattinson, right, having his photo taken with fans upon arrival for an exclusive fan event for the final chapter of the Twilight Saga "Breaking Dawn Part 2" in Sydney, Australia.

Associated Press

forcer on the trail of two small-time crooks who held up a mob-protected card game. The weekend's other new wide release,

LD Entertainment's horror tale "The Collection," also flopped at No. 10 with \$3.4 million, averaging \$2,430 in 1,403 theaters. □

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ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi, a true native Aruban started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced hand rolled cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba. Petrocchi always had a interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crops. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba, he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The whole process took him 10 years to perfect. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the moulding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. Their handmade cigar box is specially designed with their "Aruhiba" logo. Petrocchi considers Aruhiba as a promotion for Aruba through its fine cigars. The company sells Aruhiba to the international markets as well. Visit their retail store located in front of the Historic Dutch Windmill in front of the Westin Resort, with any purchase of \$20 and up you receive a free "Aruhiba" cigar or ask for their gift box of 5 cigars get 1 FREE for only \$37. They open from Monday to Saturday from 9 am till 6:30 pm and on Sundays from 9 am to 1 pm. Aruhiba cigars are now available at the gift stores in your resort



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In this Monday, Dec. 15, 2008, file photo, Neil Young performs at Madison Square Garden in New York. Associated Press

Neil Young down by boardwalk for benefit show

DAVID BAUDER
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Neil Young said Sunday that he couldn't see performing in the area devastated by Superstorm Sandy without doing something to help people who were affected by it.

Young and his longtime backup band, Crazy Horse, will hold a benefit concert for the American Red Cross' storm relief effort Thursday at the Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa in Atlantic City. The New Jersey coastline areas were hit hard by the storm in late October.

People in the New York area who suffered damage in the storm have been supporting him for 40 years, Young said.

"I couldn't see coming back here and just playing and have it be business as usual," he said. Young is touring in the area, with concerts scheduled for Monday in Brooklyn and Tuesday in Bridgeport, Connecticut.

Minimum ticket prices for the standing-room show in Atlantic City will be \$75 and \$150, although Young notes there's no maximum. He hopes to raise several hundred thousand dollars

for the Red Cross.

Young said he was invited to join the Dec. 12 benefit at New York's Madison Square Garden that will feature Bruce Springsteen, Paul McCartney, the Who, Kanye West and others, but had other obligations. Besides, there's enough star power there, he said.

"It wasn't going to make much difference whether I was there or not, so I decided to go someplace where I could make a difference," he said.

Young performed at a televised benefit in 2001 following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, memorably covering John Lennon's "Imagine." Fans can expect a two-hour plus rock show on Thursday with opening band Everest.

No special guests are planned, although Young issued an invitation to "anyone who wants to come in and play with us that we know and we know can play."

It's hard to resist wondering whether Young's epic "Like a Hurricane" will make it onto the set list, given the occasion.

"Anything's possible," Young said. "We have the equipment." □

Letterman up for jabs with Kennedy Center Honors



The 2012 Kennedy Center Honorees, from left, John Paul Jones, Buddy Guy, Jimmy Page, Natalia Makarova, Robert Plant, Dustin Hoffman, and David Letterman pose for a group photo after the State Department Dinner for the Kennedy Center Honors gala Saturday, Dec. 1, 2012 at the State Department in Washington.

Associated Press

BRETT ZONGKER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — David Letterman's "stupid human tricks" and Top 10 lists are being vaulted into the ranks of cultural achievements as the late-night TV comedian receives this year's Kennedy Center Honors with rock band Led Zeppelin and three other artists.

Stars from New York, Hollywood and the music world gathered Sunday in Washington to salute the comedian and the band, along with actor Dustin Hoffman, Chicago bluesman Buddy Guy and ballerina Natalia Makarova.

The honors are the nation's highest award for those who have influenced American culture through the arts. President Barack Obama will host the honorees at the White House before they are saluted by fellow performers in a show to be broadcast Dec. 26 on CBS.

Meryl Streep introduced the honorees Saturday during a dinner at the U.S. State Department and noted that Letterman had surpassed his mentor, Johnny Carson, in sustaining the longest late-night television career for more than 30 years.

Stephen Colbert and Jimmy Kimmel joined in celebrating his influence on many other comedians.

"I knew Johnny, and I loved Johnny. Johnny was beyond reproach," Colbert said in a toast to Letterman. "Dave was stupid. Dave was ours. Dave was like us."

"We wanted to throw things off of buildings. ... We would love to stick our heads out the window of 30 Rock and yell at passersby, 'I'm not wearing any pants!'"

Colbert marveled at Letterman receiving such an award after he "corrupted the minds of a generation." Paul Shaffer, Letterman's longtime band leader, said he knew his boss was uncomfortable hearing such accolades, but that he was also enjoying every second of it.

Big names from the rock world dressed in black tie for the occasion to honor their heroes in Led Zeppelin as a string ensemble played "Kashmir" and other tunes at the State Department.

Foo Fighters singer Dave Grohl said he never took any music lessons when he was starting out because "my teachers were Led Zeppelin. ... They were the

most powerful thing in my life."

Lenny Kravitz said their music was special and became a lasting part of the culture of rock and roll.

"It's very difficult," he said. "You get four guys that come together and make something so much more powerful than they all are."

Zeppelin front man Robert Plant said he was flattered and overwhelmed in receiving the American culture prize. He said he was glad to see his former band mates, John Paul Jones and Jimmy Page, using good table manners.

The trio is scheduled to appear Monday on CBS' "Late Show with David Letterman." They are often asked if they'll reunite.

Plant told The Associated Press he plans to continue traveling the world and wants to make new music along the way.

"If anybody wants to write some new songs, I'm game to write songs," said Plant, who collaborated with bluegrass singer Alison Krauss on the 2009 Grammy-winning album "Raising Sand."

Hoffman was honored for charting his own path after taking a junior college class in acting that "nobody ever flunks." □

Mitt's Oval Office Moment



GAIL COLLINS

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Our subject for today is: Important Holiday Traditions Involving Mitt Romney.

You undoubtedly have heard that Barack Obama invited Romney for lunch this week, in what was described in many reports as a long-standing tradition of re-elected presidents having a good-fellowship meal with the person whose political dreams they had just shattered.

"They pledged to stay in touch, particularly if opportunities to work together on shared interests arise in the future," said the official report. "Their lunch menu included white turkey chili and Southwestern grilled chicken salad."

You'd think they could have served meatloaf. Mitt's favorite food is meatloaf. Also, Mitt loves practical jokes, and if Obama had really wanted to get in the spirit of things, he could have had Romney arrested by the Capitol Police in the lobby.

There was no press coverage allowed. The two men posed for a rather uncomfortable-looking picture, and then, the White House said, had a nice discussion about "America's leadership in the world and the importance of maintaining that leadership position in the future." A good time was had by all. Well really, what did you want them to talk about? Whether Mitt could use his extensive popularity with congressional Republicans to help resolve the fiscal cliff?

The loser-comes-to-the-White-House-for-lunch tradition is an excellent tradition, even though it seems this was actually the first one in memory. George W. Bush didn't invite John Kerry in 2004. Bill Clinton never gave Bob Dole a post-election meal, although he did give him the Presidential Medal of Freedom, which was probably more enjoyable. Historian Michael Beschloss says President Ronald Reagan didn't invite Walter Mondale.

One of the important things about traditions is that they don't have to be all that traditional as long as you get into the spirit. I was moved recently when a friend told me about how his family always gets together to celebrate Thanksgiving with a large breakfast. Every year I look forward to having Christmas with my husband's family, an event that always takes place around Dec. 8.

The post-election lunch is certainly a better White House tradition than the Thanksgiving turkey pardoning, although I do like seeing the look on Malia Obama's face whenever her dad tries to get her to pat the bird. Also, we do not want to repeat anything involving Joe Biden shopping at Costco for pies.

The makeup meal doesn't even have to make the loser feel better. (In 2008, Obama had John McCain over for a post-election meeting in Chicago, and you can see what a healing effect that had on McCain's ego.) The point is that you have two super-prominent men who hate each other doing something meaningless just because it's the civil thing to do.

There was a brief and desperate speculation before this week's lunch that Obama might be planning to offer Romney a post as secretary of commerce. It's true that Commerce is not exactly a power hub in most administrations, but presidents generally appoint people from the other party to cabinet jobs because they want to please the opposition. Obama could get more Republican good will by giving Commerce to Alec Baldwin.

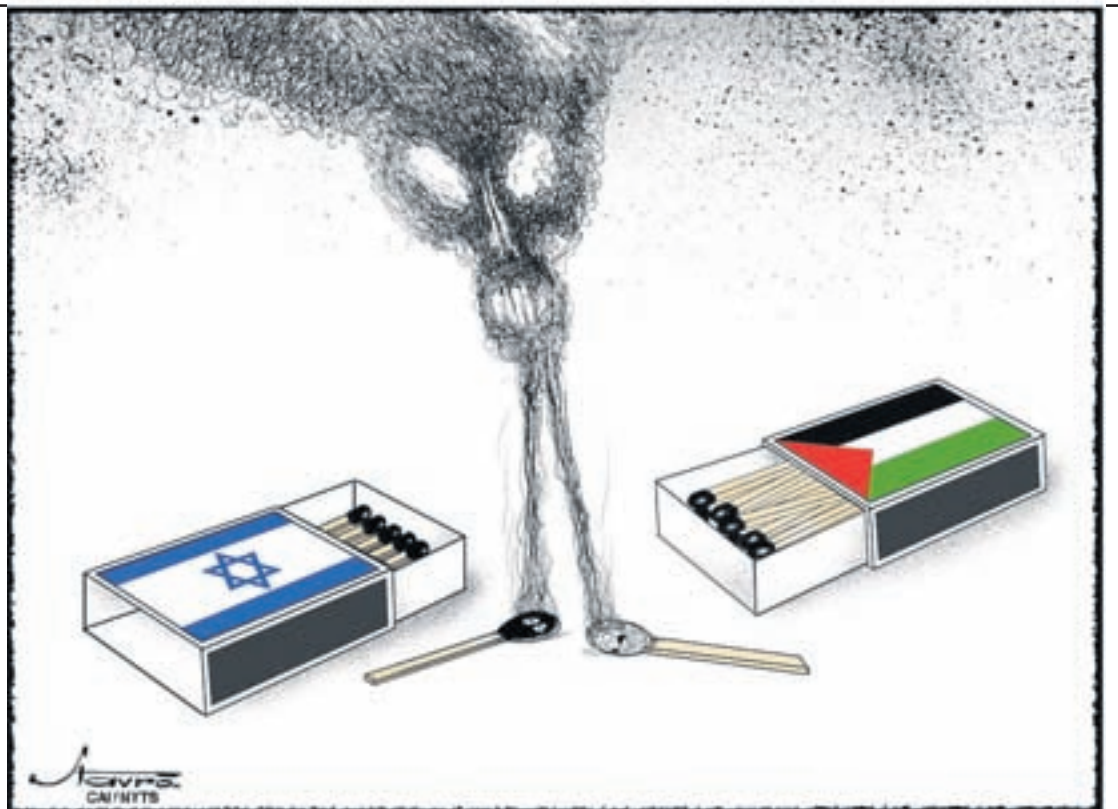
The idea of a get-together with Romney first came up during the president's victory speech. He elaborated at his first post-election news conference, saying that Romney "presented some ideas during the course of the campaign that I actually agree with."

The "actually" didn't sound all that enthusiastic. Also, when it came time to praise his former rival, Obama said Romney "did a terrific job running the Olympics." Romney said nothing whatsoever about the invitation. Perhaps he's reflected on his gifts for spontaneous comment since he told donors that Obama had won the votes of college-age women by offering them free contraceptives. □

Maybe he has decided never to speak in public again. But you do have to give him points for showing up for the lunch. He cannot be in a good mood. His lifetime dream is rubble. He got 47 percent of the vote. He's working out of his kid's office. Chris Christie is the most popular person in the nation.

As Romney's SUV approached the White House grounds, police stopped a man who tried to reach for the car yelling "Mitt! Mitt!" It wasn't clear what he had in mind. Perhaps he was an angry dog lover who still hasn't gotten over the fact that Romney once drove to Canada with an Irish setter strapped to the car roof. Perhaps he was a disappointed fan, eager to discuss the Tea Party's clever plan to resuscitate the Romney presidency by organizing a boycott of the Electoral College.

Anyhow, it was sort of par for the course. The man was arrested. The SUV rolled on, driving Mitt toward the White House and the white turkey chili. □



The Bad Luck Of Winning



JOE NOCERA

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"We're normal human beings," said Cindy Hill on Friday, moments after she and her husband, Mark, posed with an oversized check for \$293,750,000. "We're common," she added. "We just have more money."

The check, of course, represented their half of the \$588 million Powerball jackpot, which the Hills had just won, along with another, as yet unidentified, winner. From one point of view – the point of view of lottery officials – you couldn't ask for more ideal winners than the Hills.

Mark works for a meatpacking plant. Cindy is a clerical worker who was laid off in June 2010. When they were introduced to the news media Friday, their adopted daughter in tow, they talked about how the money might allow them to adopt another child. They said they were going to help various relatives pay for college. They insisted that the money wouldn't change them. The only extravagance they mentioned was a red Camaro that Mark wanted. They made winning the lottery seem downright heartwarming.

But it's not. On the contrary, lotteries may well be the single most insidious way that state govern-

ments raise money. Many of the people who buy lottery tickets are poor; they are essentially a form of regressive taxation. The odds against winning a big jackpot are astronomical – far worse than the odds at an Atlantic City slot machine. The get-rich-quick marketing – by government, let's not forget – is offensive. One New York Powerball ad shows a private jet emblazoned with the words, "Kevin's Airline." The tag line read: "Yeah, that kind of rich."

Oh, and let's not forget the fate of the people who win. They may be "that kind of rich" on the day they hit the jackpot, but, more often than not, they don't stay that way. People who suddenly fall into extreme wealth – whether because of an insurance settlement, a professional sports contract, or a lottery win – rarely know how to handle their new circumstances.

There is, to take one of the most prominent examples, the story of Jack Whittaker, a West Virginia businessman who won a \$315 million Powerball jackpot in 2002. A decade later, his daughter and granddaughter had died of drug overdoses, his wife had divorced him, and he had been sued numerous times. Once, when he was at a strip club, someone drugged his drink and took \$545,000 in cash that had been sitting in his car. He later sobbed to reporters, "I wish I'd torn that ticket up."

I read about Whittaker, and a host of other sad stories about lottery winners, in a recent e-book written by Don McNay entitled, "Life Lessons From the Lottery." McNay is a financial adviser and newspaper columnist, based in Kentucky, whom I've gotten to know over the years. He specializes in helping people who have come into sudden money.

He is convinced that the majority of people who win big-money lotteries, like the recent Power-

ball prize, wind up broke within five years. "The money just overwhelms them," he told me the other day. "It just causes them to lose their sense of values."

Every once in a while, a lottery jackpot, like the recent Powerball, becomes so large that it attracts national attention. People who normally understand that lotteries are a sucker's game, can't resist buying a ticket or two. It all seems like good fun. It is worth remembering the damage lotteries do – sucking money from the disadvantaged, while burdening the winners with sums they can't handle – and remembering as well this is the doing not of some nasty corporation but of government. Whatever else lotteries are, they aren't harmless. It is impossible to know whether the Hills will be able to remain "normal" once they cash their nine-figure check. □

McNay says that those who do the best are the people who are able to remain anonymous, take the money in annual increments, find a good financial adviser who can insulate them from all the new friends they are going to have, and spend their money with some real purpose in mind. Based on what they said at the news conference, the Hills seem conscious of the need to get professional financial help. On the other hand, they are anything but anonymous. Like most states, Missouri insists on showcasing lottery winners, as it did with the Hills on Friday. What better marketing tool for lottery officials than the winners' happy smiles and that oversized check? The Hills, alas, have also decided to take their money in a lump sum, which, after taxes and a lump-sum discount, will amount to \$132 million. "Powerball Winners Already Divorced, Bankrupt," read the headline in the satirical newspaper, The Onion, the day after the winning numbers were announced. □

Have it your way?

New York is site of drive to unionize fast-food workers

STEVEN GREENHOUSE

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NEW YORK – After three years of working at a McDonald's restaurant in Manhattan, Alterique Hall earns \$8 an hour – and is yearning for something better.

So when he heard about an unusual campaign that aims to unionize dozens of fast-food restaurants in New York in the hope of raising wages to \$15 an hour, Hall, 23, was quick to sign on.

"It's time for a change," he said, "It's time to put on the gloves."

Hall enlisted in what workplace experts say is the biggest effort to unionize fast-food workers ever undertaken in the United States, a campaign that began late last week. The effort – backed by community and civil rights groups, religious leaders and a labor union – has engaged 40 full-time organizers in recent months to enlist workers at McDonald's, Wendy's, Domino's, Taco Bell and other fast-food restaurants across the city.

Over the decades there have been occasional efforts to unionize a fast-food restaurant here or there, but labor experts say there has never before been an effort to unionize dozens of such restaurants. The new campaign aims in part to raise low-end wages and reduce income inequality, and is also an uphill battle to win union recognition.

Ruth Milkman, a sociology professor at the City University of New York, said there had been so few efforts to unionize fast-food workers because it was such a daunting challenge.

"These jobs have extremely high turnover, so by the time you get around to organizing folks, they're not on the job anymore," she said. Nonetheless, she said the new effort might gain traction because it is taking place in New York, a city with deep union roots where many workers are sympathetic to unions.

Jonathan Westin, organizing director at New York

Communities for Change, a community group that is playing a central role in the effort, said hundreds of workers had already voiced support for the campaign, called Fast Food Forward.

"The fast-food industry employs tens of thousands of workers in New York and pays them poverty wages," Westin said. "A lot of them can't afford to get by. A lot have to rely on public assistance, and taxpayers are often footing the bill because these companies are not paying a living wage."

Westin said the campaign was using techniques that differed from those in most unionization drives, and was still developing overall strategy. He declined to say whether it would pursue unionization through elections or by getting workers to sign a majority of cards backing a union.

McDonald's issued a statement about the incipient unionization push. "McDonald's values our employees and has consistently remained committed to them, so in turn they can provide quality service to our customers," the company said.



Amir Maloney, center, with other demonstrators at a pro-unionization protest outside a McDonald's at Times Square in New York. Fast-food workers at several restaurants in New York walked off the job last week, firing the first salvo in what workplace experts say is the biggest effort to unionize fast-food workers ever undertaken in the United States.

(Michael Nagle/The New York Times)

It added that the company had an "an open dialogue with our employees" and always encouraged them to express any concerns "so we can continue to be an even better employer." McDonald's noted that most of its restaurants were owned and operated by franchisees "who offer pay and benefits competitive

within the" industry.

Even with a union, it might be hard to obtain wages of \$15 an hour, and many employers say they would most likely employ fewer workers if they had to pay that much.

Westin's group, New York Communities for Change, has played a major role in the recent uptick in union-

izing low-wage workers in New York, many of whom are immigrants. In the past three months, his group has helped win unionization votes at four carwashes and six supermarkets in New York.

The sponsors of the fast-food campaign also include UnitedNY.org, the Black Institute and the Service Employees International Union, a powerful union that is playing a quiet but important role behind the scenes.

Several religious leaders are backing the effort. "I've become involved because it is primarily a matter of justice," said the Rev. Michael Walrond of the First Corinthian Baptist Church in Harlem. "We seek to protect those who are the most vulnerable in our culture, and some of the most vulnerable people in the city are fast-food workers who work for poverty wages."

According to the state Labor Department, median pay for fast-food workers in the city is around \$9 an hour – or about \$18,500 a year for a full-time worker.

Linda Archer, a cashier at a McDonald's near Times Square, said she wished she earned that much. □



A demonstrator holds a protest sign in New York. Fast-food workers have begun the biggest effort to unionize ever undertaken in the United States.

(Michael Nagle/The New York Times)